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AARDVARK-VANAHEIM PRESENTS

CEREBUS

36
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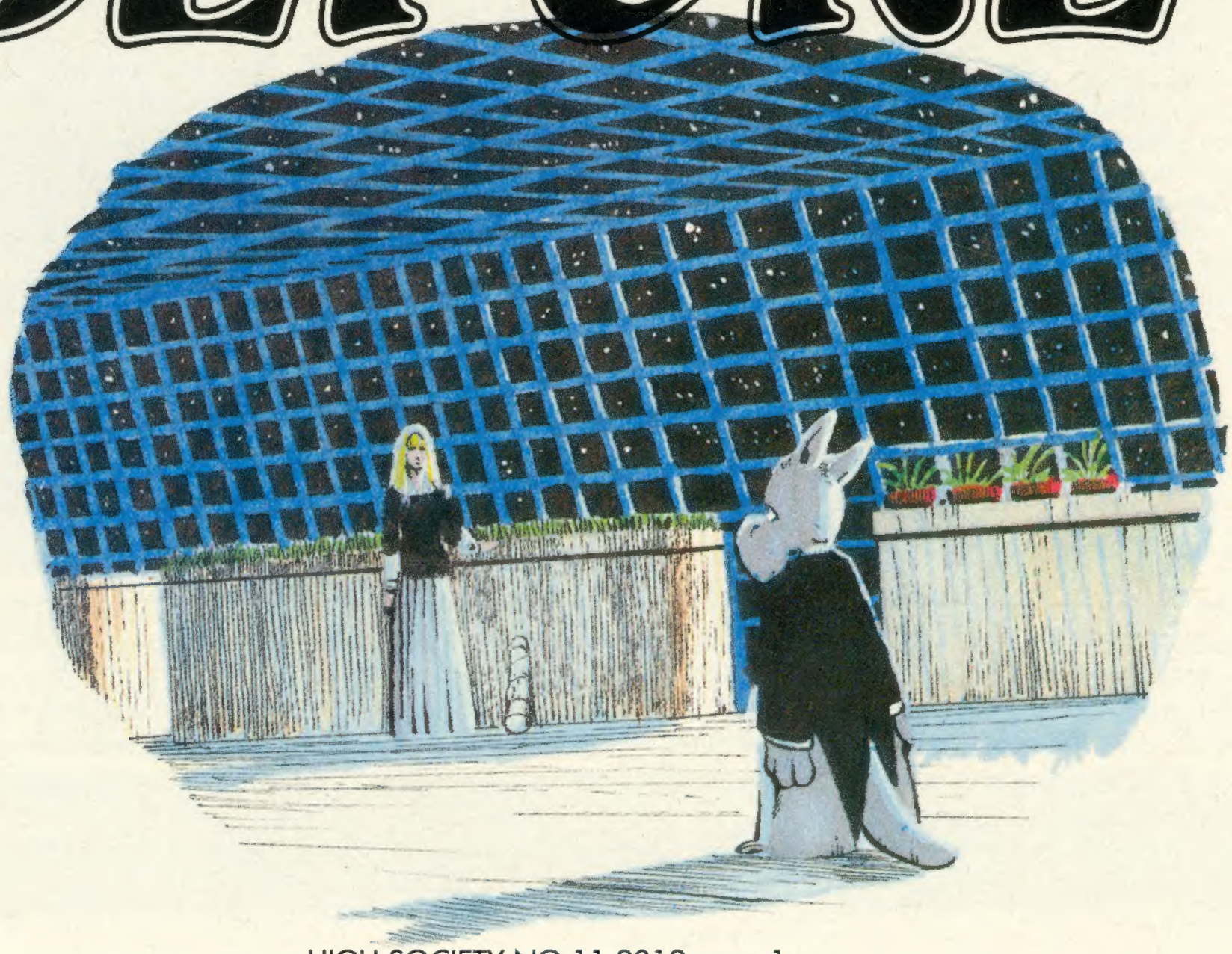
THE NIGHT BEFORE



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Dave and Deni met December 16, 1976.
They married October 6, 1978.
Separated August 20, 1983.
Divorced August 1986.

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in the letters, ads and archive pages are null and void!
IT'S, LIKE, 30 YEARS AGO, EH?

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A Note from the Publisher

During the last six months, or so, I've been so busy just trying to keep up with the growth Cerebus has had, that I haven't really sat down and said anything in these editorials.

The F.O.O.G. (friends of ol'Gerber) portfolio, that some of you may have heard about will be out in April from the same people who distribute Cerebus and Swords of Cerebus. There will be ten plates in it and an illustrated envelope drawn by Jack Kirby (!) and inked by Alcala. The plates were drawn by Barry Windsor-Smith, Bernie Wrightson, Jeff Jones, Mike Kaluta, Charles Vess, Gene Colan (inked by Dave Sim), Marshall Rogers Frank Thorne, Wendy Pini (inked by Dave Sim), and, of course, Dave Sim. As you can see, it is quite a varied list of artists, showing the wide diversity in this field. It seems, somehow, quite exciting to me that I am lucky enough to live at a time when there is so much going on in alternative publishing. It's an ever-shifting landscape, so you have to be alert to keep up with the changes happening within it. It's not always easy . . . and I can well understand how some folks have gotten lost in the shuffle.

During the time between last issue and this one, Dave and I paid a little visit to Richard and Wendy Pini. I must admit that there isn't usually much time for either the Pini's or Dave and I to visit as usually one of us is working on a deadline. But as it turned out, Richard and Wendy had just brought No. 12 to the printers the day before and we had just brought No. 35 to the printers a few days before that. Who knows when our schedules will coincide again -- so we thought we'd take advantage of it.

Dave and I had never driven down to New York before, so it was really fun seeing all those mountains. Ontarians aren't used to mountains.

The nice thing about visiting the Pini's is that they do very much the same thing we do. It makes comparing notes that much easier.

The two days went by quickly, but I think a lot of good came out of it. Whether or not it actually made concrete changes in what any of us do, I couldn't say. It sure feels nice to know you aren't the only ones facing the kinds of ups and downs that Dave and I experience because of Cerebus. It just seems to me that the more I see Richard and Wendy, the more I like them.

It wasn't what most people would consider an exciting two days, but it. was bizarre to watch someone else (for me, Richard) doing basically what I do every day. I spent the first day zooming around Poughkeepsie with Richard as he photocopied artwork, planned an ad, and checked out the printing of Elfquest No. 12. We printed issues 23-25 at their printers in Wappingers Falls, so I had a strong feeling of dejavu there. This is partly because I've spent so much time in printing companies lately, and also because, since Cerebus had once been printed there,, they knew who I was when Richard introduced me to them. The whole thing was like watching myself, in a fun-house mirror, seeing Richard checking out Elfquest at his printers. I guess it's because it's what I do at my printers.

The four of us did all the usual "couple things". We went out for dinner, went window-shopping after, and then sat around at their place, talking. Unfortunately for the Comics Journal, there was no tape recorder going at that session. It went on for about four hours, covering everything from people watching you eat at a convention (which got four votes of least-favorite fan activity), to the problems encountered with walking across a crowded dealers room at a convention (which I seem to be the only one with no complaints on).

I have a feeling that this was probably when the elves took our hubcaps. Honest, we only had two left on the car when we got home!! But it's OK, they left us a parking ticket.

Deni

CEREBUS

VOL. 1 NO. 36 MARCH, 1982

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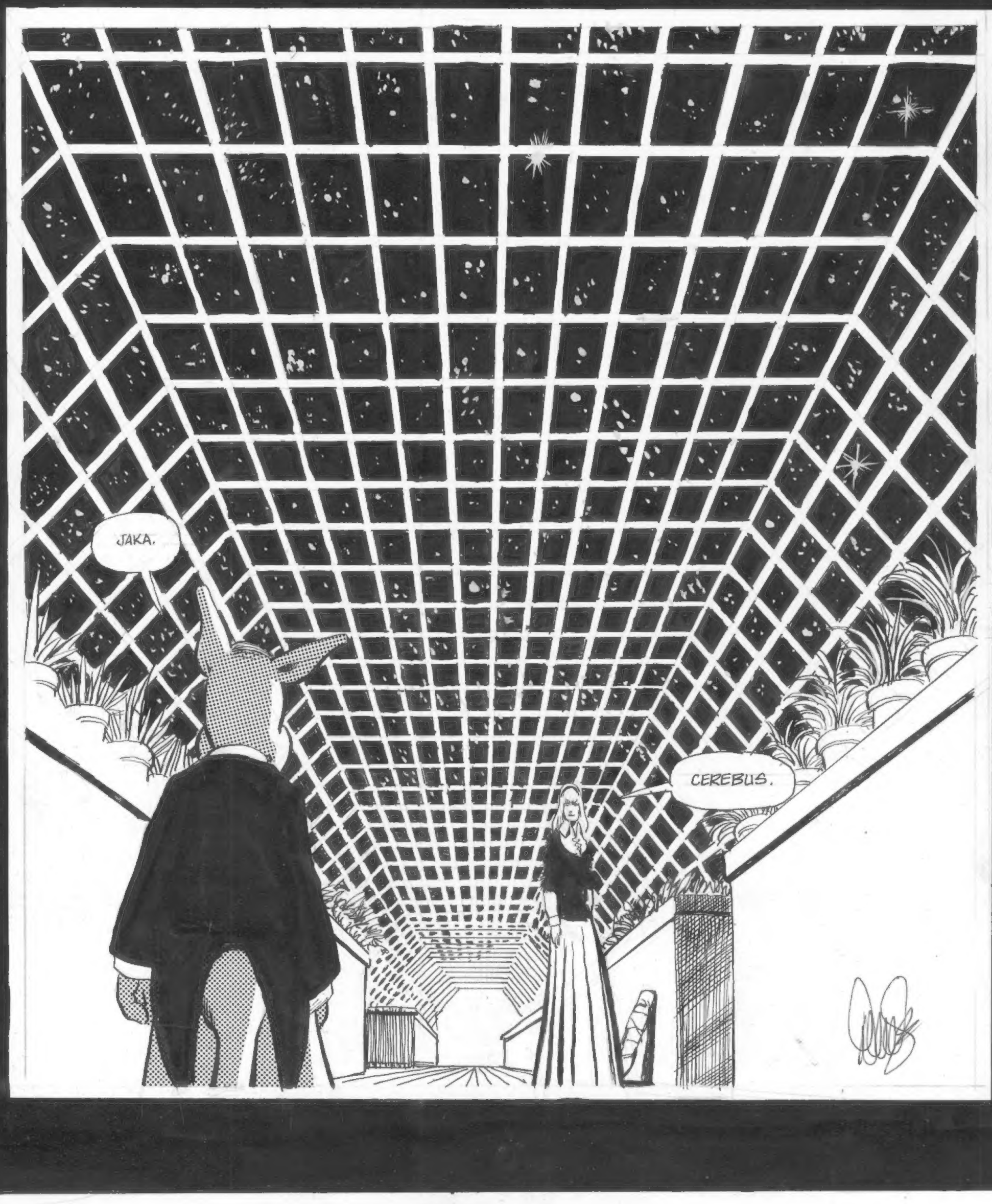


YOU LOOK...

...WONDERFUL.

YES.

CEREBUS KNOWS.

THIS SUIT COST CEREBUS FIFTY CROWNS.

REAL PAPER ONES... NOT THE LOUSY **GOLD** CROWNS LIKE YOU HAVE IN THE **LOWER** CITY...

AND LOOK AT **THIS**...

ALMOST FOUR HUNDRED CROWNS. CEREBUS **HAD** A THOUSAND, BUT, HE HAD TO PAY FOR HIS SUIT, BRIBE A CAB DRIVER AND ...

...AND OTHER THINGS, TOO.

CEREBUS IS GOING TO HAVE A **LOT** OF MONEY SOON...

THOUSANDS ...

MILLIONS MAYBE.

I SEE.

CEREBUS GETS ALL OF HIS MEALS FOR FREE. HIS ALE, TOO.

THEY GAVE CEREBUS *SEVEN ROOMS* ALL TO HIMSELF...

CEREBUS HAS A ***BED*** THAT'S BIGGER THAN THE ***ROOM*** YOU LIVE IN...

I SEE.

YOU MUST BE VERY HAPPY...

WHAT? OH. YEAH. CEREBUS STARED AT A BUS-BOY UNTIL HE WET HIS PANTS. THEY'RE ***ALL*** AFRAID OF CEREBUS HERE.

ARE THEY REALLY.

PETRIFIED. CEREBUS DOESN'T EVEN HAVE TO *SAY* ANYTHING. ALL HE HAS TO DO IS LOOK AT THEM. LIKE...

...THIS.

CEREBUS COULD BEAT UP **ANYONE** IN THIS HOTEL. CEREBUS COULD TAKE THEM ON FOUR AND FIVE AT A TIME. NO SWEAT.

I SEE.

DO YOU UNDERSTAND **NOW** WHAT CEREBUS IS SAYING?

I'M NOT SURE THAT I DO.

NO.

CEREBUS WANTS YOU TO MOVE IN HERE WITH HIM.

WHAT ABOUT ...

ASTORIA.

ASTORIA LIVES WITH CEREBUS.

I... KNOW.

EVERYONE KNOWS.

I MEANT-- WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO HER.

ASTORIA WILL LIVE WITH US...

SHE HAS A ROOM BEHIND A SLIDING PANEL.

THE THREE OF US.

LIVING IN YOUR SUITE...

IT'S OKAY...

SEVEN ROOMS.

THAT'S TWO EACH FOR YOU AND ASTORIA.

THREE FOR CEREBUS ...

ASTORIA IS GOING TO MAKE CEREBUS WEALTHY.

OH. AND YOU MIGHT HAVE TO DO SOME WORK.

TIDYING UP-- RUNNING ERRANDS, YOU KNOW.

OTHERWISE ASTORIA WILL ACCUSE CEREBUS OF TAKING IN A FREELOADER.

YOU MADE THE RIGHT DECISION COMING TO SEE CEREBUS...

CEREBUS WILL SEE TO IT THAT YOU NEVER HAVE TO DANCE AGAIN.

I LIKE DANCING.

IN GREATER IEST, DANCERS ARE CONSIDERED... WELL...

TO BE PERFECTLY ***HONEST*** ...

IT WOULD BE BAD FOR BUSINESS IF PEOPLE KNEW CEREBUS WAS LIVING WITH A ***DANCER.***

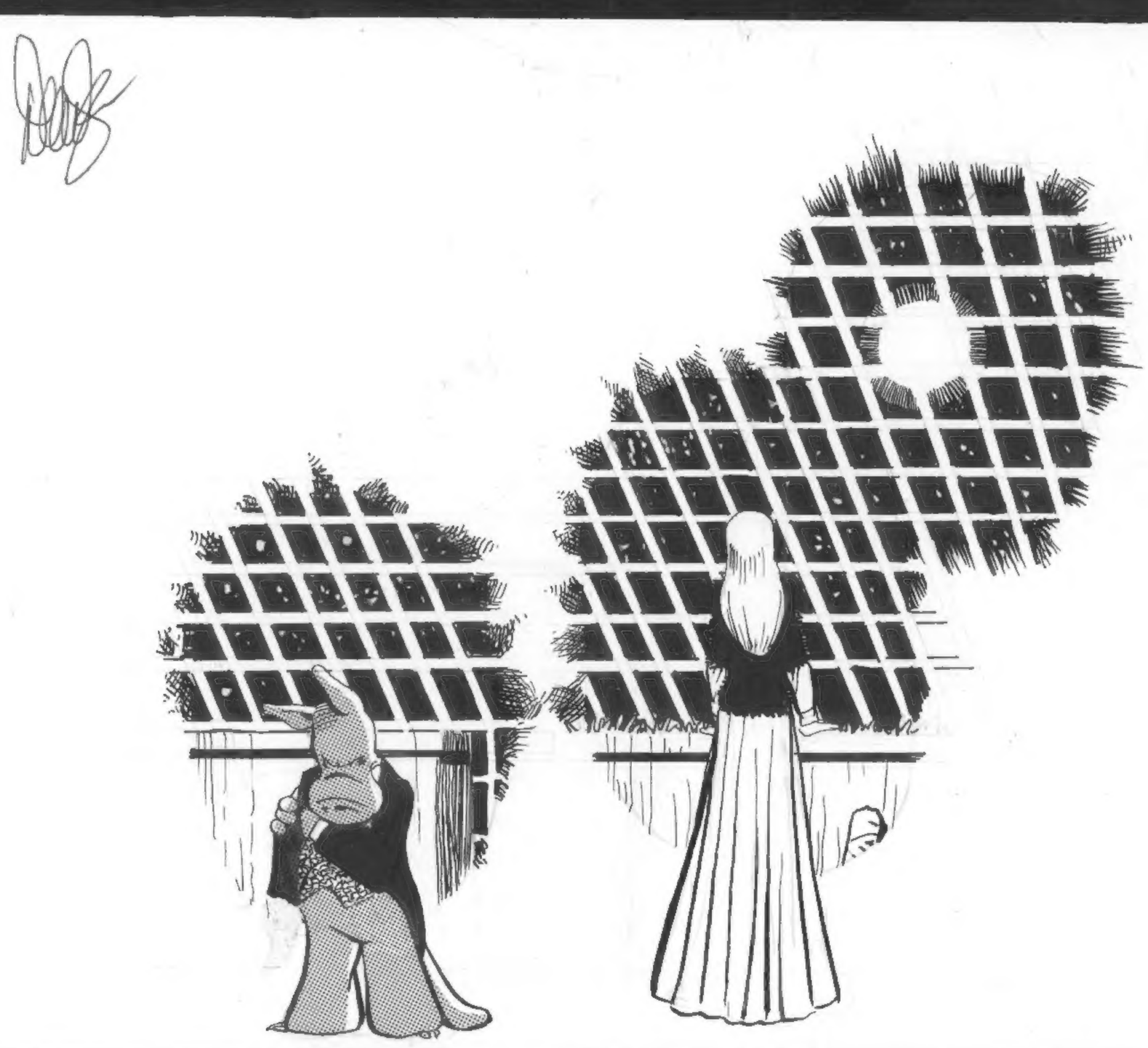
I SEE.

AND WOULD YOU STILL KILL A YAK FOR MY SUPPER ???

OR WOULD THAT ***ALSO*** BE BAD FOR BUSINESS?

IF-YOU-REALLY
WANT-A-YAK
,,,
BANK of HELL
CEREBUS-
WILL-BUY-YOU
ONE.

THANK
YOU.
I'M AFRAID IT
WOULDN'T BE THE
SAME, SOMEHOW.



WHEN DID YOU REMEMBER ABOUT ME.

ABOUT *US*...

WHENEVER CEREBUS WAS..DRUNK...HE'D HAVE THESE... *DREAMS.*

AND, ONCE, CEREBUS SAW...

...A DANCER..

IN A TAVERN... IN...

BEDUIN.

JAKA!

YES?

WHAT'S THIS?

I--I DON'T KNOW

IEST RENEGOTIATING HER LOAN PAYMENTS.

YOU'RE CRAZY.

THE PRIME MINISTER TOLD CEREBUS THAT JOKE.

THE PRIME MINISTER.

YOU **ARE** MOVING UP IN THE WORLD AREN'T YOU?

THAT WHAT WOULD HAPPEN?

I DON'T *UNDERSTAND.*

THAT'S WHY CEREBUS WASN'T ***TOO*** SURPRISED WHEN YOU SHOWED UP...

ASTORIA WARNED CEREBUS IT WOULD HAPPEN.

FRIENDS FROM CEREBUS' PAST.

SHOWING UP ON CEREBUS' ***DOORSTEP.***

NOW THAT CEREBUS IS SO...

SO...

...SUCCESSFUL?

ARE YOU INFERRING THAT I'M HERE FOR SOME KIND OF HANDOUTZ!

NO.

CEREBUS IS *IMPLYING* YOU'RE HERE FOR SOME KIND OF HANDOUT...

YOU SEE, THE *SPEAKER* IMPLIES ...

THE *LISTENER* ...

I-KNOW-THE-DIFFERENCE ...

JAKA.

IT'S OKAY.

I DIDN'T COME HERE FOR **CHARITY.**

CEREBUS CAN **AFFORD** TO GIVE YOU A HANDOUT...

I CAME TO SEE YOU...

YOU DON'T **BELIEVE** ME, DO YOU?

I CAN TELL BY YOUR ...

JAKA!

JAKA.

CEREBUS HAS BEEN A *MERCENARY*--A *TAX COLLECTOR*...

... A PROFESSIONAL *GAMBLER*...

CEREBUS MAY NOT KNOW ***MUCH***...

...BUT CEREBUS KNOWS WHEN SOMEONE IS ***BROKE.***

UNTIL **YESTERDAY**, I HAD OVER ONE HUNDRED CROWNS ON DEPOSIT IN THE BANK OF IEST...

YOUR LIFE'S SAVINGS, NO DOUBT ... AND NOW IT'S **GONE?**

YES.

BAD INVESTMENT?

... I'M BEGINNING TO **THINK** SO.

YES.

THERE ARE A **LOT** OF SHADY CHARACTERS IN IEST.

YOU'LL BE SAFE FROM THEM, *THOUGH*, LIVING *HERE*...

...WITH **CEREBUS.**

HE WASN'T A SHADY CHARACTER AT **ALL.** HE WAS A RESPECTED SALVAGE MERCHANT.

FROM *BEDUIN*...

SALVAGE MERCHANT, EH?

SO WHAT DID HE SELL YOU-- *WORTHLESS* STOCK IN HIS ***COMPANY*** OR SOMETHING?

NO...

IT WAS MORE LIKE... AN ***ANTIQUE***...

LIH-HUH.

I WASN'T *SURE* IT WAS ***REAL*** -- BUT HE LET ME PICK IT UP.

AND YOU TRUSTED YOUR ***INSTINCTS***...

YES.

AT FIRST, HE DIDN'T WANT TO SELL IT...

OF ***COURSE***.

THAT'S THE OLDEST TRICK IN THE BOOK...

HE SAID IT WAS LIKE NO METAL HE HAD EVER SEEN BEFORE...

CEREBUS ONCE STAINED A JUG WITH *BERRY JUICE* AND SOLD IT AS RARE ***PINK-IRON***.

AND THAT HE KNEW NOTHING ABOUT IT

EXCEPT THAT IT HAD BEEN FOUND WITH A... LARGE QUANTITY OF... GOLD COINS...

SOME OF THEM... DATING BACK... MORE THAN...

THIRTY YEARS.

YOU MUST FEEL PRETTY *FOOLISH*...

YES.

I'M AFRAID I HAVE TO *LEAVE*, NOW.

LEAVE!?

BUT...

YOU'RE BROKE! WHERE WILL YOU GO? WHAT WILL YOU DO?

I'VE TAKEN CARE OF MYSELF SINCE I WAS *TWELVE*...

I'LL MANAGE.

NO.

AS A MATTER OF FACT ...

I WANT TO GIVE **YOU** SOMETHING ...

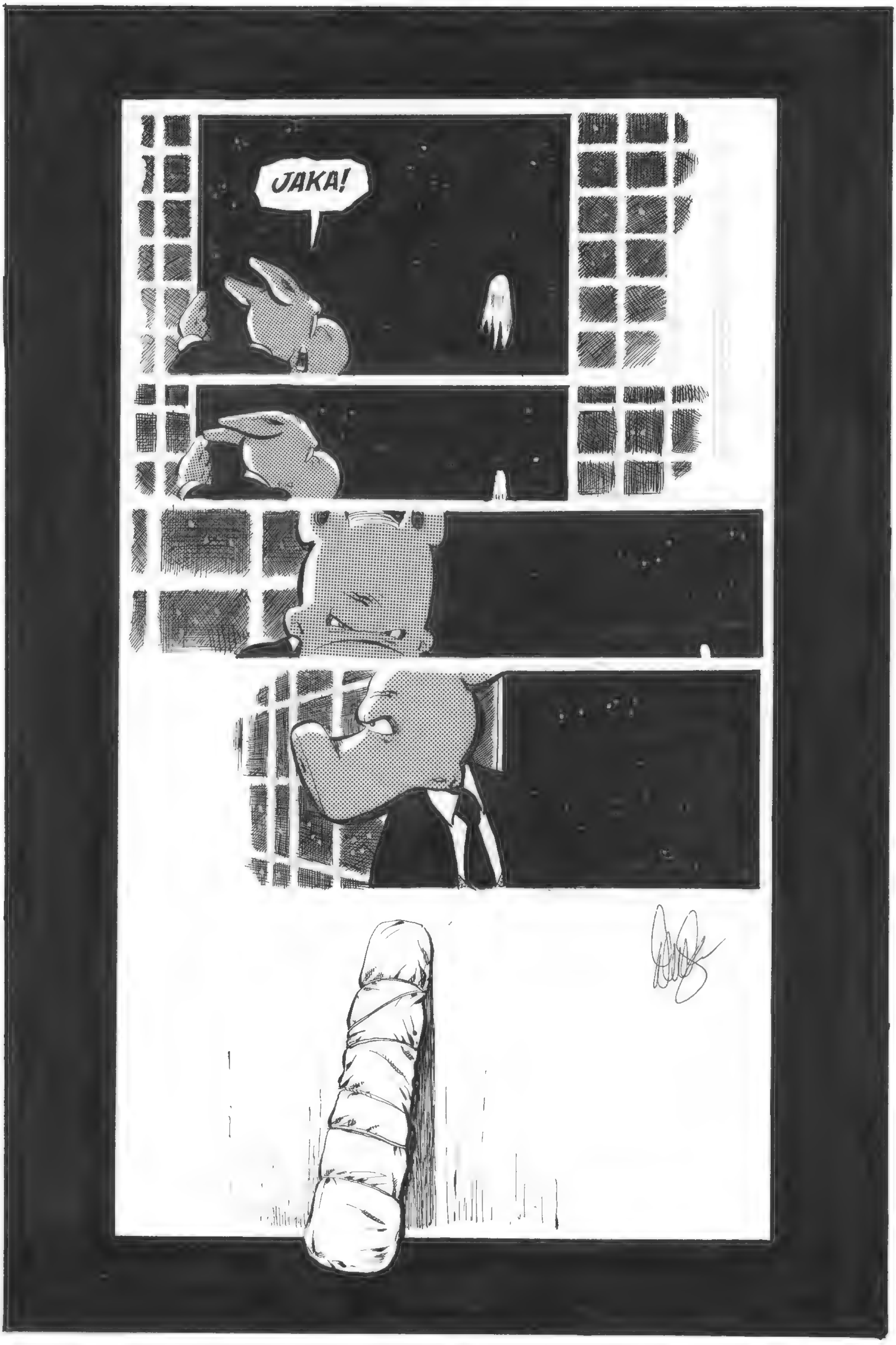
"IT'S IN THAT PACKAGE NEXT TO YOU..."

AT LEAST LET CEREBUS GIVE YOU SOME MONEY TO TIDE YOU OVER...

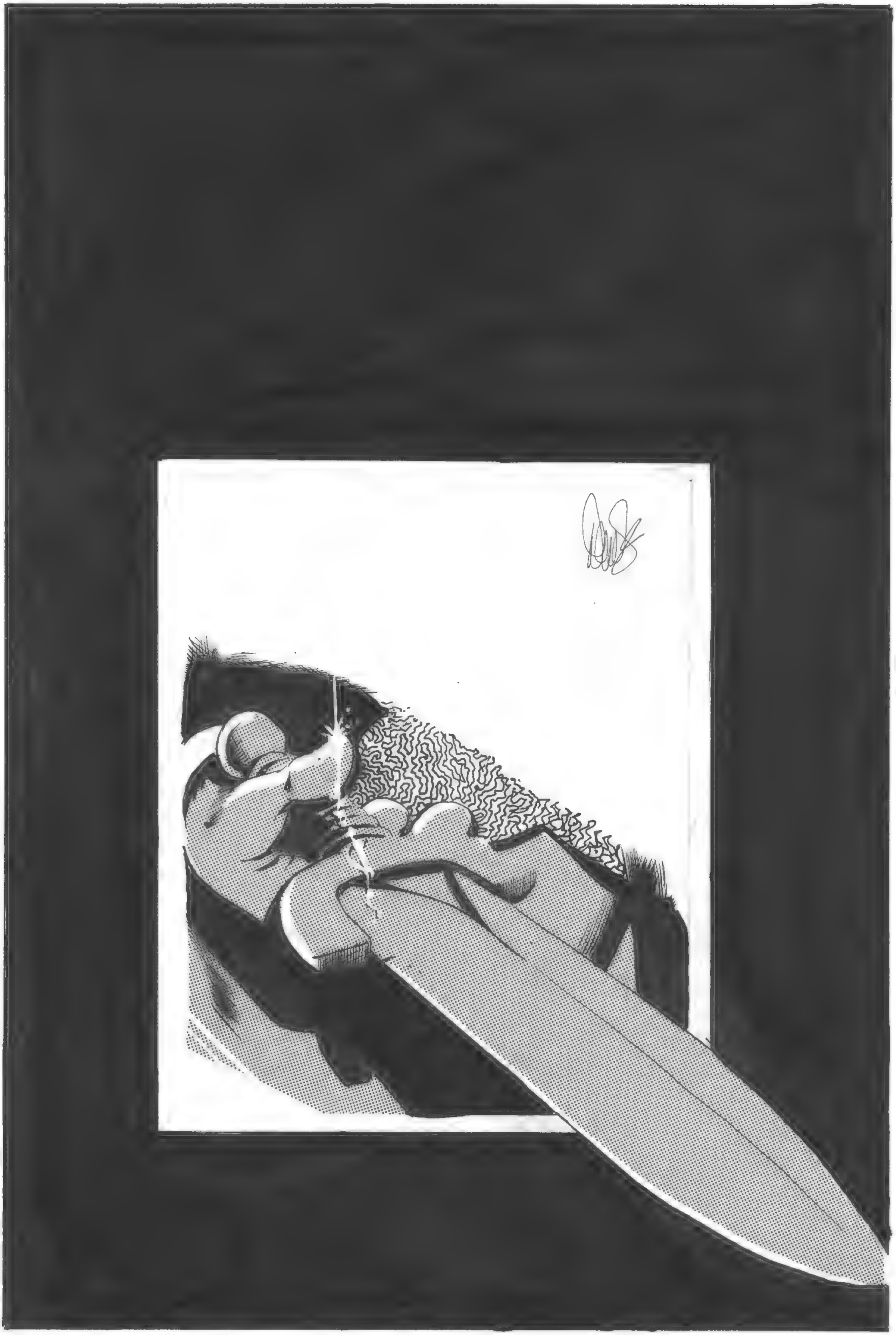
HUH?

I'LL LEAVE IT TO YOU TO DECIDE...

...WHETHER OR NOT IT WAS A BAD INVESTMENT...


JAKA!

SNAP



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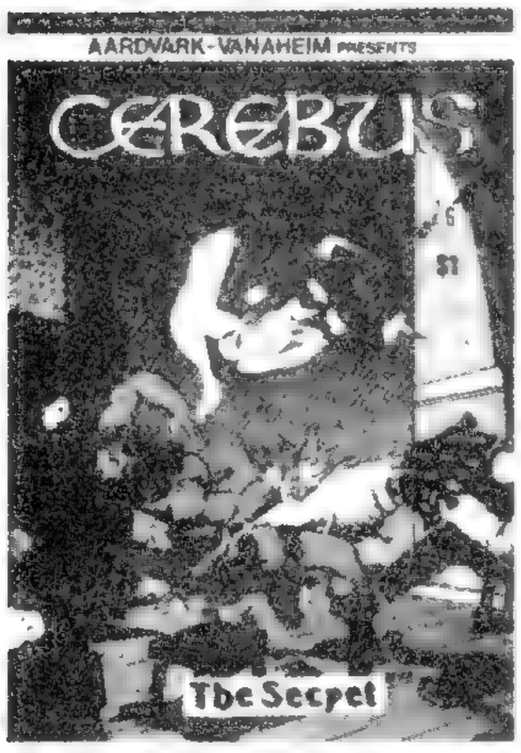

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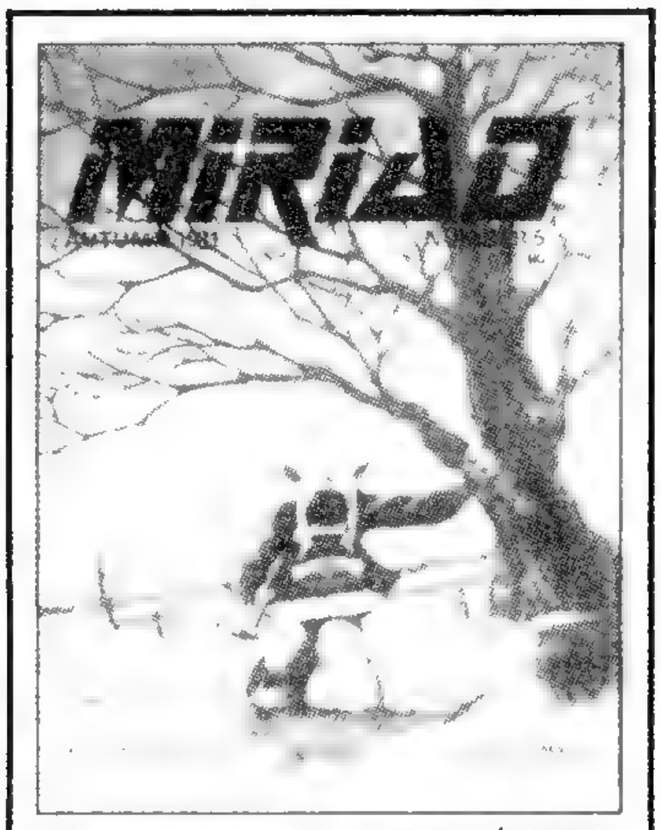

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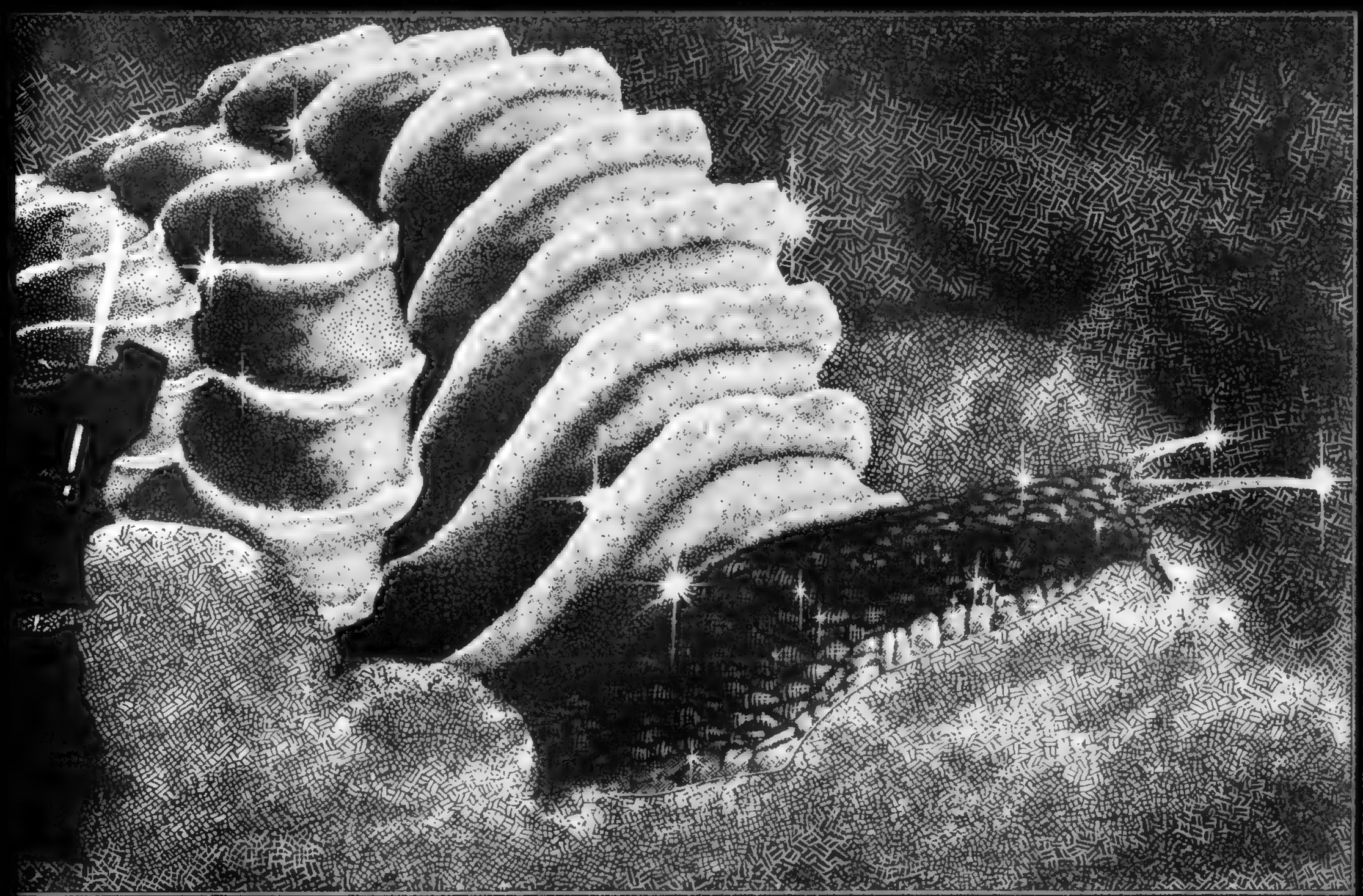

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Welcome to Heaven, Dr. Franklin... Part Three

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HMMM... NOW, LET'S SEE... OKAY.. THIS WILL BE DICTAPHONE TRANSCRIPTION NO.10932... THE CURRENT STATUS OF **OPERATION GODSWITCH**: THE SEARCH BY *MARCUS AURELIUS*, FORMER ROMAN EMPEROR AND CURRENT OMNIPOTENT DEITY, FOR A *SUCCESSOR*. THIS SUMMARY PREPARED BY JOAN OF LORRAINE, *RECORDING SECRETARY*... HMMM ...I WONDER WHERE THEY ARE... MARCUS HAS BEEN SO *STRANGE* LATELY... HASN'T SAID HE LOVES ME IN WEEKS... OOPS.., OH SHOOT.. LEFT THE MACHINE ON... ERASE FINAL GRAPH...

IN RE: THE AFTERLIFE OF **BENJAMIN FRANKLIN**... DR. FRANKLIN SEEMS TO BE ADAPTING QUITE WELL TO CONDITIONS AS THEY ARE HERE. ALTHO *UPSET* BY THE CRUCIFIXIONS AND BY THE INSANITY AND SUBSEQUENT DESTRUCTION OF *DEVINCI*, HE SEEMS RESIGNED TO THE STERN JUSTICE WHICH MARCUS... STRIKE THAT... WHICH LORD GOD HAS IMPOSED. DOCTOR FRANKLIN IS BOTH *INTELLIGENT* AND.. UM... WHAT'S THE WORD..? OH... *FLEXIBLE*... AND IS CURRENTLY BEING SHOWN THE **END** OF THE **WORLD** BY *SWEET*... STRIKE THAT... BY THE LORD HIGH DEITY.... ...THEY'VE BEEN GONE A LONG TIME... I HOPE THE DOCTOR HASN'T BEEN *DIFFICULT*... MARCUS CAN GET SO ANGRY... AND I DON'T THINK DR. FRANKLIN WOULD LIKE BEING ENDLESSLY REINCARNATED AS A SNAIL... ...HE CERTAINLY IS CHARMING.. I WONDER IF ALL THOSE STORIES ABOUT HIS PROWESS.. NEVERMIND... ONCE HE FINISHES TRAINING AS ASSISTANT GOD, PERHAPS MARCUS CAN TAKE A *VACATION*... JUST THE TWO OF US... CREATE A LITTLE *UNIVERSE* SOMEWHERE, WHERE WE CAN RELAX AND BE TOGETHER... ...THAT WOULD BE SO NICE... *SO NICE*... ...SO... **NUTS!** I LEFT THE MACHINE ON AGAIN... ERASE LAST GRAPH... ...AFTER HIS *EDUCATION*, DOCTOR FRANKLIN WILL BE READY TO ASSUME HIS RESPONSIBILITIES... ...EVERYTHING IS ON SCHEDULE... ....END SUMMARY...

SONY

MARCUS! MARCUS! WHERE ARE YOU?

I'VE BEEN WALKING THROUGH THIS FOG FOR *HOURS*. I BEGIN TO DOUBT THE WISDOM OF ABSENTING MYSELF SO HASTILY...

NO MATTER HOW ANGRY I WAS... WAIT... THIS **KNEW-CLEE-AIK** FOG SEEMS THINNER AHEAD...

IN THE OPEN AT LAST AND BACK IN SOME PART OF HEAVEN... MADNESS. BUT THEN GOD **HIMSELF** IS MAD... I MUST THINK..

I MUST FIND *SOMEONE* AS AN ALLY... WHOM **MARCUS** WILL RESPECT.. VIRGIL PERHAPS OR ZENO OR EVEN...

WAIT.... I HAVE JUST REALIZED...

THIS HEAVEN IS DESERTED..10 MILLION YEARS OF DYING AND THERE ARE ONLY 5 PERSONS IN HEAVEN...?

PERHAPS IF I CAN FIND THE STAIRWAY WHERE **SUNSHINE AQUARIUS** GREETED ME...

OOOMMMMM

WAIT... THAT VOICE...

OOOMMMMM

OMMMMMmm....

SUNSHINE!

OH, HI, DR. FRANKLIN.

YOU...YOU ARE **FLOATING**...

YEAH, I KNOW.

...BUT **HOW** IS THAT *POSSIBLE*?

OH, IT'S EASY. IT'S JUST **TM**. I DID IT ALL THE TIME BEFORE...'COURSE IT WORKS *BETTER* AFTER YOU'RE DEAD.

IT'S GROOVEY.. WANT ME T' *TEACH* YOU?

...AND THEN YOU JUST RELAX AN' BECOME TH' MANTRA... IT'S EASY... MY MOON'S IN PISCES SO I'M RILLY PSYCHIC... JUST GROOVE ON TH' KARMA OF THE WORD.. YOU'RE CAPRICORN, HUH? I KIN TELL... OKAY, NOW YOU TRY.. OPEN YER MIND..

OH, WOW PRETTY GOOD! HOW'D YOU DO THAT?

AH, FOUND YOU AT LAST, GUY. DON'T GO CHARGING OFF LIKE THAT, YOU COULD GET LOST... AND UNIT TIME IS UNIT MONEY, FELLA!

MARCUS... THE PEOPLE.. THERE ARE NO FOLK HERE. IN ALL OF HEAVEN THERE ARE ONLY THE FIVE OF US...

REINCARNATED MOST OF 'EM, BEN. THEY COULDN'T FOLLOW THE GAME PLAN..

SEE, BEN, YOU COULD'VE BEEN A REAL FIRE-STARTER BACK ON EARTH, BUT IF YOU'RE NOT A TEAM-PLAYER HERE...

I WEARY OF YOUR "GAME PLANS"! YOU HAVE PLAYED FALSE WITH MANKIND! YOU HAVE NIGGLED AND JIGGLED WITH HISTORY.. INSURING THE WORST POSSIBLE OUTCOME OF EACH EVENT. HUMANITY NEVER HAD A CHANCE!

I GRANT YOU, THE HITLER-THING WAS OFF-BASE, BUT LET'S DON'T HAVE GAZE ON THIS BEN...

...AFTER ALL, WHAT IS "HUMANITY" BUT A LOT OF DEBBY BARNES: AIR-HEADED.. SELF-INDULGENT, IRRESPONSIBLE, AND PARASITIC!

IRRESPONSIBLE?

POP ME A FLARE IF I'M OFF-BASE ON THIS, BEN, BUT YOU STILL DON'T GET THE BIG PICTURE.. A GOD CAN'T BE SWEATING OUT HOW VIABLE INDIVIDUALS ARE... THIS IS STAR-TIME, PAL... I THINK YOU NEED SOME TOUGHENING UP..

HEY, MAN, I FIXED YOU BOSCO EVERY DAMN MORNING!

AN' MY NAME'S NOT "DEBBY" IT'S SUN... GIRK!

UP-SEE DAISY!

NO

R-RIPP

SUNSHINE!

?

GROOVEY! NOW DO THE TORCH!

HA HA HA

UNDERSTAND, **BEN**... POWER IS THE GAME PLAN... PEOPLE DON'T WAN'T STOICISM... I CAN ACCEPT THAT... SELF-CONTROL AND VIRTUE ARE **BORING**... RIGHT?

RIGHT! MY BACK-UP THEORY IS BETTER ANYHOW ...I'LL BE **ZEUS**...' AND YOU KNOW WHAT ZEUS' PRIME DIRECTIVE ALWAYS WAS.... **REVENGE!**

I SEE SOME OF MY **GOD-HOOD** HAS STARTED RUBBING OFF ON YOU, BEN... *TERRIF!* I KNEW YOU WERE THE OPTIMAL CHOICE REPLACEMENT-WISE!

OH, WOW... ...A **SCORPIO!**

...LIKE THIS!

CLAP

I MAY HAVE COME OUT OF THE SHOOT A LITTLE FAST ON DRAFTING YOU, **BEN.** I DON'T THINK YOU'RE READY... A LITTLE RE-BIRTH... THAT'S THE TICKET... IF I **RIP** YOUR MINDS OUT AND SEND YOUR NAKED SOULS SQUALLING BACK TO EARTH FOR ANOTHER **10 YEARS** OF PAIN... YOU'LL APPRECIATE IMMORTALITY SO MUCH MORE!

...OR MAYBE HE'S VIRGO... **HEY...** WHERE'D ALL THE **CLOUDS** GO...?

SUMMARY CONTINUED... **DR. FRANKLIN** HAS RESIGNED HIS APPOINTMENT AND IS ABOUT TO LEAVE... I HOPE **MARCUS** ISN'T TOO DISAPPOINTED... HE SEEMS SO DISTANT... I HOPE HE HASN'T FORGOTTEN ME... OH DARN... ERASE FINAL GRAPH...

TO BE CONTINUED...

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ACROSS CANADA AND AROUND THE WORLD

AARDVARK COMMENT

P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2

Dear Dave,

You know there's something wrong with you when you buy a five dollar paper back book full of material you already have, to read maybe eight pages of stuff. But this is what happened to me with Swords of Cerebus No. 3. And I know what it is: I've become an aardvark fanatic.

As far as I can tell, I was one of the first on the East Coast having started with No. 6 (see, this friend of mine who was going to school in Michigan turned me on to the book; who says all the fads get started on the West Coast?) Cerebus has become more and more important to me as a comic book reader as I've begun to lose interest in the main stream stuff (after all, how many times can you watch the universe explode?)

Now that I've proclaimed my staunch admiration for your work, I have one criticism and one request.

First the criticism: do you know how long it's been since Cerebus has killed anybody? I mean, I'm not particularly bloodthirsty by nature, but he is supposed to be deadly, right? (Remember the first issue where it was mentioned that Cerebus was the finest fighter to enter the city - or something along those lines . . . I don't have the book with me). These days all he does is go around threatening people. It seems to me he'll have to back his threats with action eventually . . .

Now the request: I am presently working at DAYTIME TV magazine (or, as we like to call it, the Magazine at the end of the universe). Don't ask how I ended up here, of all places, after four years at Cornell University, suffice to say that I am working off enough bad Karma to clean up half a dozen previous lives completely.

I spend most of my time putting away photographs of the plastic Barbie dolls that act in soap operas. I spend the rest of my time taking the photos out of the files and handing them to our editors. My official title is Associate Photo Editor. My own name for the job, a more appropriate one, I think, is Morgue Attendant.

Here's my request; could you lend me Cerebus for a few days? I'd like to have the shaggy little thug around here to do some much needed damage. I'd start him out on the files. If that works out, he could get to work on a few of the editors.

I couldn't afford to pay him much, but I'd be happy to buy him a few tankards of ale. And think of the job satisfaction!

Jerry Lazar
Daytime TV
355 Lexington Ave.
New York, New York 10017

We tried, Jerry. But we couldn't get him through customs without a cage. (And, needless to say, there wasn't much chance of getting him into one.)

As to Cerebus' lack of aggression . . . keep watching.

Dear Dave Sims

I've just received issue No. 34 and for the 34th time my mother asked me why I was chuckling out loud for.

For some reason Elrod never really caught my fancy as a character but after reading Moorcock's Elric and this issue my view has swung around 180. This guy is great and I appreciate his "witties"as much as he does.

Another old character was also introduced in the form of Bran Mak Mufin (Macmuffin?). This could really get Cerebus in trouble with the inquisition if Bran goes around saying Cerebus is the supreme deity, and all that.

Over all I think Cerebus is starting to take a back seat to all these other characters. Though this is not necessarily bad, at least for a short time, I feel a dominant Cerebus is more interesting. I'll save all my other questions until the story is over to see if they are answered.

I'm looking forward to seeing Lord Julius again and his reaction to Cerebus' political decisions concerning Palnu.

Do I see a Gene Day influence in the inking of the soaked Elrod?

Darryl Burgwin
6728 Chisholm Ave.
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3L 2R9

The inquisition is on the ropes, actually. More on this in the next couple of issues.

Dear Dave and Deni

I just had to write. Too many questions cropping up that I need evaded:

1. What, I say what happened to our second favorite character? Considering that his rigor-mortified -- stiff that is -- body was last seen used as an offensive weapon? Mayhap an addendum to Swords No. 4?
2. You said, in response to an earlier letter -- I disremember when -- that Cerebus presently is more the type to sit in a tent at the top of a hill and watch the battle. Whatever happened to the killer-who-looks-like-a-bunny? I mean, the last real bit of gumption we've seen out of him was his handling of Dirty Fleagle and Dirty Drew (No. 27), who are not exactly the most competent warriors. *Then* he gets humiliated by the Moon Roach, has considerable trouble handling him at grips (Remember "Move your hands or lose them, cootie?"), and appears to be getting unduly civilized, overall. Sure, he disposed of Elrod in the last issue (No. 34), but we all know that Elrod would have difficulty fencing with Illusionists (oh wow, like, a sword). This is not particularly a stylistic complaint, nor even much of a complaint at all; I am just afraid that Cerebus might spend the next 266 issues in nothing but political intrigue and high society. True, as you commented, Cerebus is getting older; but he is only 27 now, as opposed to 26 in the killer-who-looks-like-a-bunny issue. He shouldn't be going all tame and helpless all of a sudden. Tell me it isn't so.
3. You've probably heard this eighteen times before, but lately the stories have been wonderful. One little thing though. You're giving me, and probably thousands more, an ulcer with these endings. Instead of reading an issue, chuckling a lot, and waiting patiently for the next, recently we've been left with endings so abruptly transitory that I, at least, sweat nonstop for the next

CEREBINA.

Cerebina, She-Devil Without a Bra

Kjartan Arnorsson
Hraunbraut 14, Kopavogi 200, ICELAND

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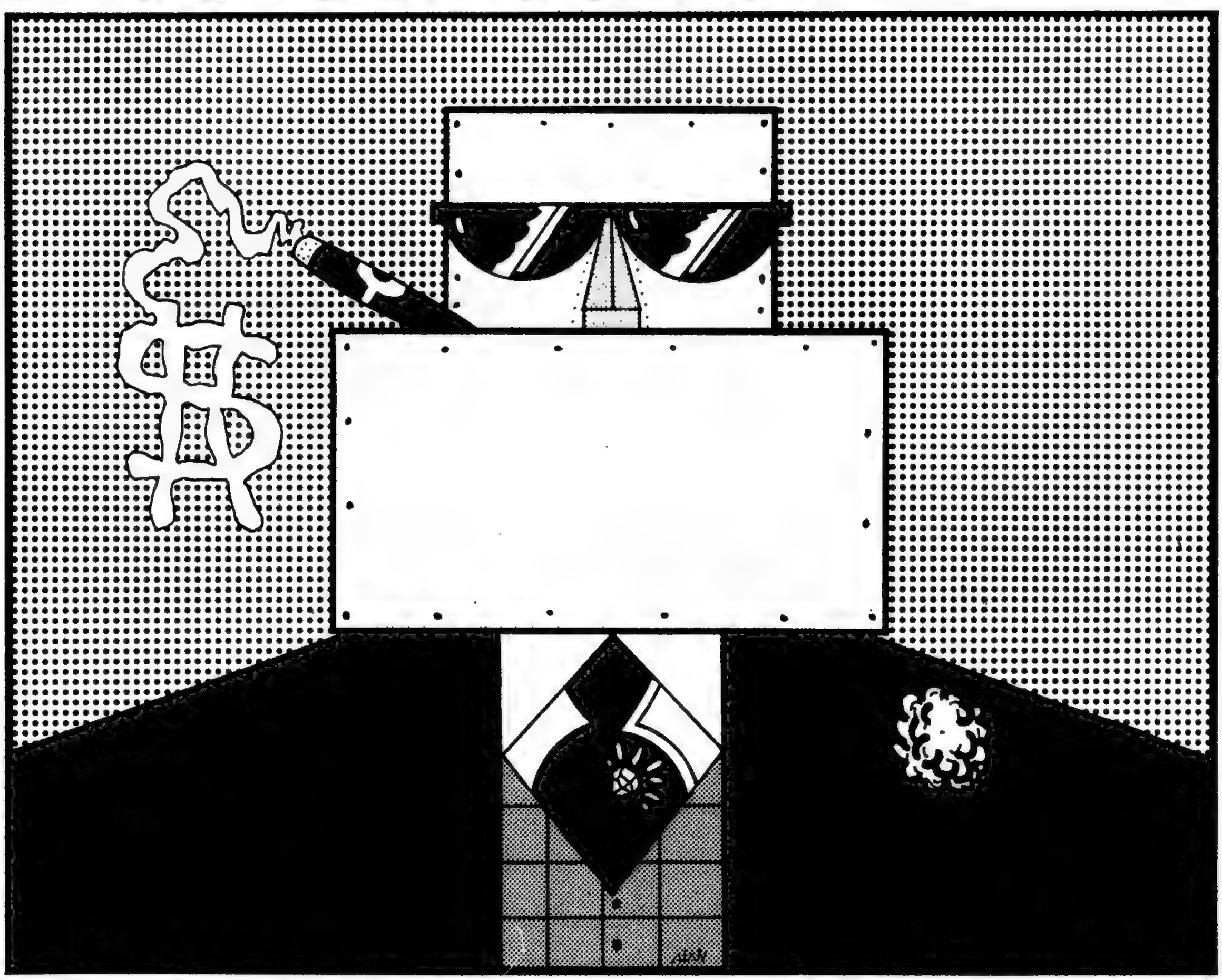

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AARDVARK COMMENT

P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2

month. Couldn't you maybe begin a new plot idea at the beginning of an issue and not at the end? You don't need to use artifice to get people such as me to buy the next issue; once a Cerebus fan is hooked, he's hooked. The last few issues have been nerve-wrecking.

4. I did enjoy the Unique Story printed in the back of No. 32-33. The only problem is that it pales somewhat in comparison with the body of the issues.

5. Anyway, total compliments on issue No. 34. Aside from the nerve-wrakingness of the last page, I love the plot complications introduced. I'd darnnear forgotten about the Pigts, as well as almost given up hope on Elrod. Keep up the superb work.

Michael Koenecke
M236 Jester Center Halls
Austin, Texas 78784

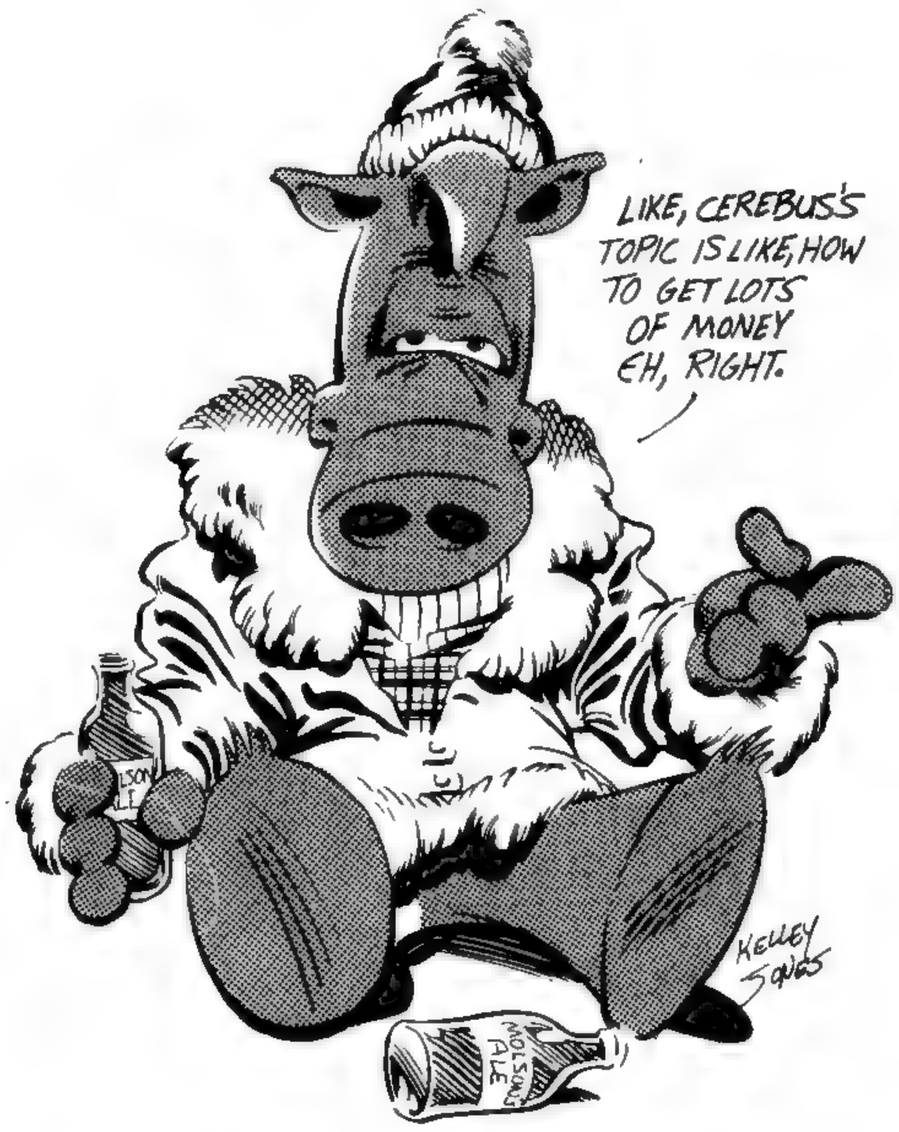
1. Don't -- I say -- don't look now son, but he's back.

2. See Cerebus' comments about the reaction to him in lest elsewhere in this issue. He had a hectic couple of years there; let's let him catch his breath while he can, hmm?

3. There's a lot of changes ahead for Cerebus before issue No. 50, but I promise that "High Society" does end there. (or within one or two issues, he said, hedging his bets).

4. This seems as good a point as any to request that comments regarding the Unique Stories include a "yes" or "no" on the question of whether you'd buy a complete comic book by the artist involved.

5. Thank you. I love letters with numbered question.



CEREBUS'S GREAT WHITE NORTH

Good day. Our topic for today is "People who continue to do something even after, like, y'tell 'em not to." Ohay. like, doing cartoons like this one is only doing one thing. And that's, uh, making it look like certain countries are stupid. Which is, like, not fair at all. Cause, like what if somebody did that to you, right? And you shouldn't make fun of how any certain country, like, talks, eh? See, we were driving in a certain other country last month to, like Poughkeepsie, right? And when we parked in the street, we got a ticket. Which is really dumb, eh? But it shows you that, like, we have stuff we can make fun of, too, if you guys are going to be complete hosers. So, take off, eh?

Dear Dave and Deni

Thank you for your reply to my letter, you really go out of your way for your fans. The magnitude of Dave's genius would have probably made CEREBUS a success even if he ignored the public in the classic Ditko tradition.

How much more would this comic cost if it were printed in colour? Is this something you have considered recently? Maybe you could publish CEREBUS in both black-and-white and colour? That way completists would end up having to purchase 3 (counting the eventual SWORDS reprint) copies of each story.

I can hardly wait until next month for the return, I say, the return of you-know-who. You're getting it all wrong, boy.

I recently used a drawing of a familiar-looking Aardvark in the newspaper ad for my shop. I hope you don't mind.

LONG LIVE THE AARDVARK!

Bill Hall
8923 North Seneca Street
Weedsport, New York 13166

I have been considering lately that it might work to reprint more than four stories per volume, once Swords has reprinted the first twenty-four issues (Volume 6), making, then, numbers 1-25 (all the pre-High Society stories) available in a three-volume set. The stories would not be interrupted with introductions and there would be no new material included, except for a new cover painting. Colour might be a possibility, if we go to a mainstream publisher as the Pini's did. I'm not certain what kind of sales we could get for a colour Cerebus reprint, but we'd certainly be interested in hearing from all of you.

Dear Dave

Cerebus is great. Really quite exceptional. Good stuff. In fact, too good. I have a bad feeling about it. When does Bill Mantlo take over?

David Tompkins
272 Paranoid Street
West Nervous Sweat, Conn. 06119

Now is that nice? What did Bill Mantlo ever do to you?

Dear Deni

Funny the way things work out. In Swords No. 2 the artist fellow writes of his distributor's and later his own misgivings about Cerebus No. 5. Three years ago I started hearing things about this Cerebus. The thing that struck me most about it at the time was that there seemed to be an awful lot of them; then as now "alternative" comics tended to come out twice a year at most, STAR*REACH being the most frequent at quarterly. The CEREBUS I happened to pick up to sample it was No. 5. It didn't seem like such a much; the only thing that stood out was the misuse of the word "penultimate" ("the penultimate swordsman"), a pet peeve of mine. Somehow (maybe someone has told you this already) many people have gotten the idea that penultimate means "extremely ultimate". It means nothing of the sort. Penultimate is the one before the ultimate, i.e., nine is the penultimate number when counting from one to ten. Unless there was only going to be one swordsman after this Mak Muffin guy, "penultimate swordsman" doesn't mean much. Class dismissed. Anyway the upshot was that I didn't catch up with Cerebus again 'til early last year.

In the old continuity controversy, Dave was right in the first place. To hell with it, write the best story you have. There's been a slight tendency in the last dozen issues or so to eliminate ambiguities. I think it's a bad idea. Solutions are never as interesting as mysteries. "Mind Game 2" in particular told a little more about Cerebus than we really want to know. When you have an

identification character as elemental as Cerebus, the reader (well, this reader) prefers to read in the characteristics he chooses. Letting on that Cerebus has had seven years of mystical training disappoints the readers who want to see him as a hard-headed realist. Anyway, the artist fellow's first instincts are usually the best. He should trust them.

If Aardvark-Vanaheim ever becomes an empire, how about getting another book for Dean Motter to edit? Andromeda had a Canadian comics rennaissance in the works when it folded. There seems to be something special going on in your country in comics; it needs a showcase. Failing that, how about getting Tom Nesbitt into your back pages? Does Cerebus take up every bit of the artist fellow's working day? (that is, might he be doing other things in the future?) Wouldn't it be nice if I quit asking questions?

R. Fiore
c/o Comics Journal

I'm trying to find some time for outside projects, but Cerebus does take up three minutes out of every five, I guess. Thanks to R. Fiore for our penultimate letter of the month.

Dear Dave

As a long-standing, but long silent, Cerebus fan, I just want to say that Cerebus No. 33 was one of the most fascinating issues I've read. It brought to light some of the big changes our hero has gone through, or actually, the changes that have been going on around him. Time was, the "killer-who-looked-like-a-bunny" would pull out his sword and slice, dice, and make julliene fries out of any problem that presented itself. Now, he finds himself tangled up with a collection of priests, merchants, financiers, and politicians, at the mercy of a Machiavellian lady lobbyest and a psychologically unstable moon-dropper. The poor little guy! Barbarians, especially of the earth-pig variety, are becoming obsolete, and there isn't a thing he can do about it.

Serious, deep, insightful character analysis aside, I think I'm beginning to fall in love with Astoria. The lady is absolutely perfect! She's managed to adapt the same killer instincts that made Cerebus such a successful barbarian to the emerging bureaucracy. She's the only worthy opponent Cerebus has had for a long time, and, to my knowledge, the only sane one. I hope she'll be around for a long time.

Speaking of being around for a long time, I hope that "Unique Stories" will become a regular feature. Heck, I wish it could have been possible for it to become it's own book. It was not fated to be, I suppose, but I hope that Aardvark-Vanaheim can continue to provide high-quality, avant-garde comics work. After all, you have a highly selective audience, one which can appreciate good, off-beat, stories and art.

Hope to be with you for the next 267 issues.

Francis Herman
2001 Main St.
Buffalo, New York 14208

Our intention with the back pages "UNIQUE STORIES" feature is to better prepare ourselves for the large job of publishing new talent. The barbarian isn't verging on extinction in Estarcian, but they are rare as hen's teeth in the more affluent parts of the major cities.

FANTACON '81

Third in a series of four photo's by William C. Johnson of Dave, Deni, and friends at FANTACON in Albany, N.Y., September 18-19, 1981

Me and Deni without friends (let me rephrase that).

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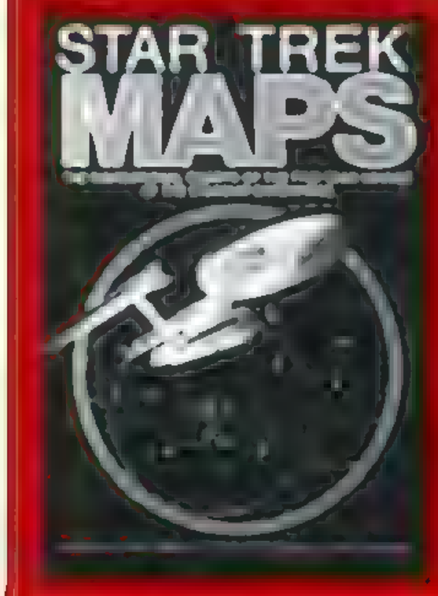

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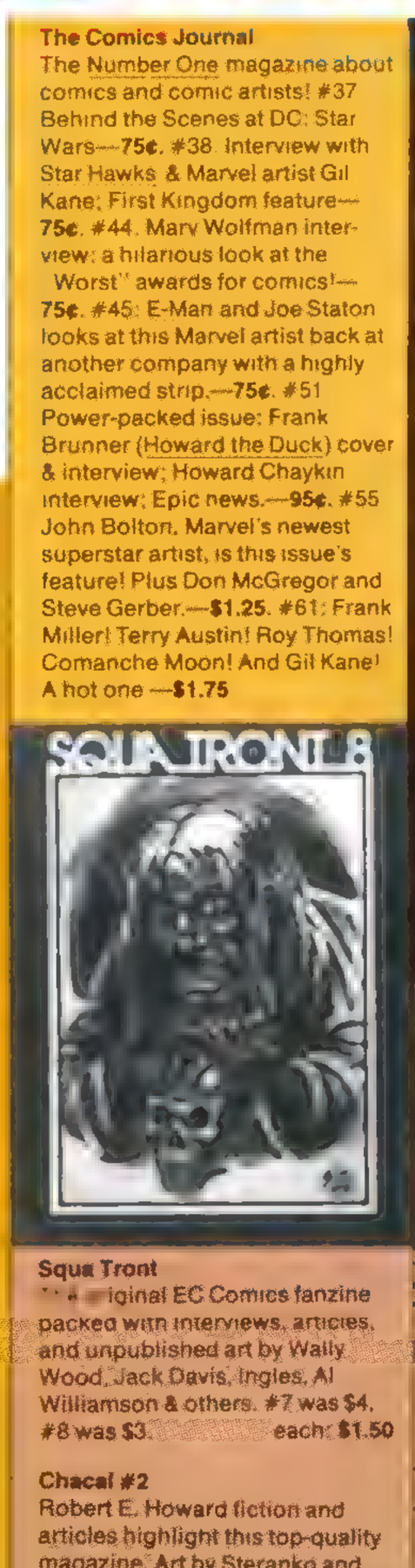

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CEREBUS ARCHIVE

"Fan letter from Mike Price with photos from the COMIC KINGDOM appearance in San Diego on the '82 Tour."

- Dave Sim

Jan. 17, 1983

Dear Dave & Deni,

Finally, I'm able to send photos from your Oct. 28 apperance at the Comic Kingdom store in San Diego; as well as a copy of the sketch I commissioned portraying the Regency Elf with the savage earth-pig born; prime minister "Fluffy". It was only during the recent holiday season that I finally used up this roll of film, though admittedly my own ego also contributed a bit to this delay.

I had not intended to do any further work on the rough pencil sketch I'd shown you at the store, keeping it stuck in the back of my drawing pad once it had served its purpose of giving you the general pose I'd wanted to see <u>your</u> interpretation of. However, your unexpected note tasked me to finally attempt a passable inking of my sketch, to allow the comparative display of both drawings within the same frame.

I greatly appreciated this opportunity to collect some of my favorite story elements in one tableau; especially the kind of "take" I love to see. I've long enjoyed the Elfs design, for she is (intentionally?) similar to a certain other pixie that I've been slowly collecting cels of over the years. I'll be sorry to see the eventual circumstances which will take Cerebus away from the Regency.

Highest regards,

Mike

Mike Price
2027 Front St., Apt. 2
San Diego, CA. 92101

P.S. Toward identification on the enclosed photos, you two share the spotlight in two of them with the Comic Kingdom owner, Jack Dickens, and employee Susan Avery. (I've already given them copies.)

"Cerebus and Regency Elf sketch for Mike Price [see previous page]."

- Dave Sim

"Mike Price's pencil sketch of Cerebus and the Regency Elf [see previous 2 pages]."

- Dave Sim

"Inked version of Mike Price's drawing of Cerebus and the Regency Elf [see previous 3 pages]."

- Dave Sim

"Tinkerbell animated cels owned by Mike Price."

- Dave Sim

"Tinkerbell animated cels owned by Mike Price."

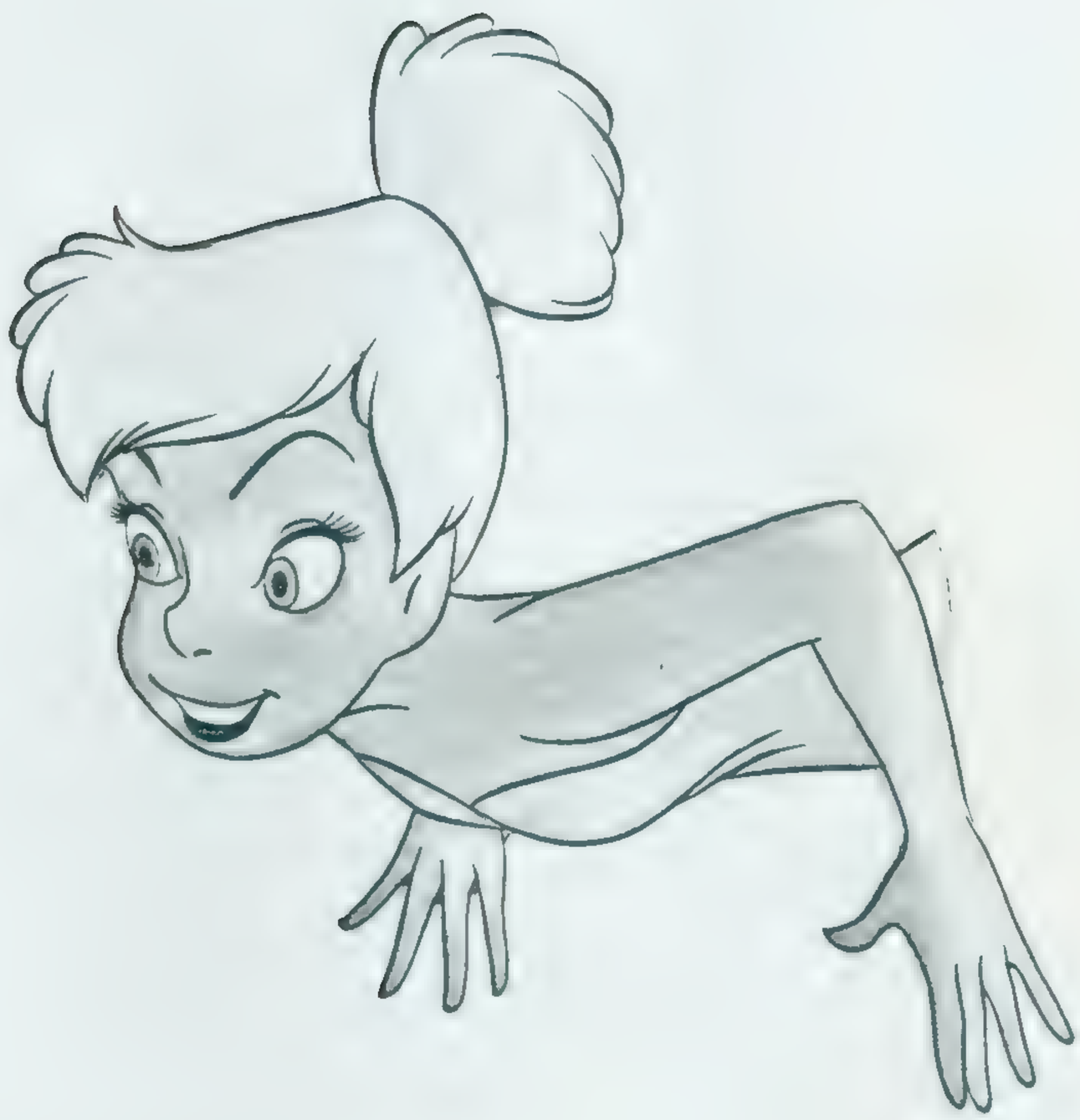
- Dave Sim

"Tinkerbell animated cels owned by Mike Price."

- Dave Sim

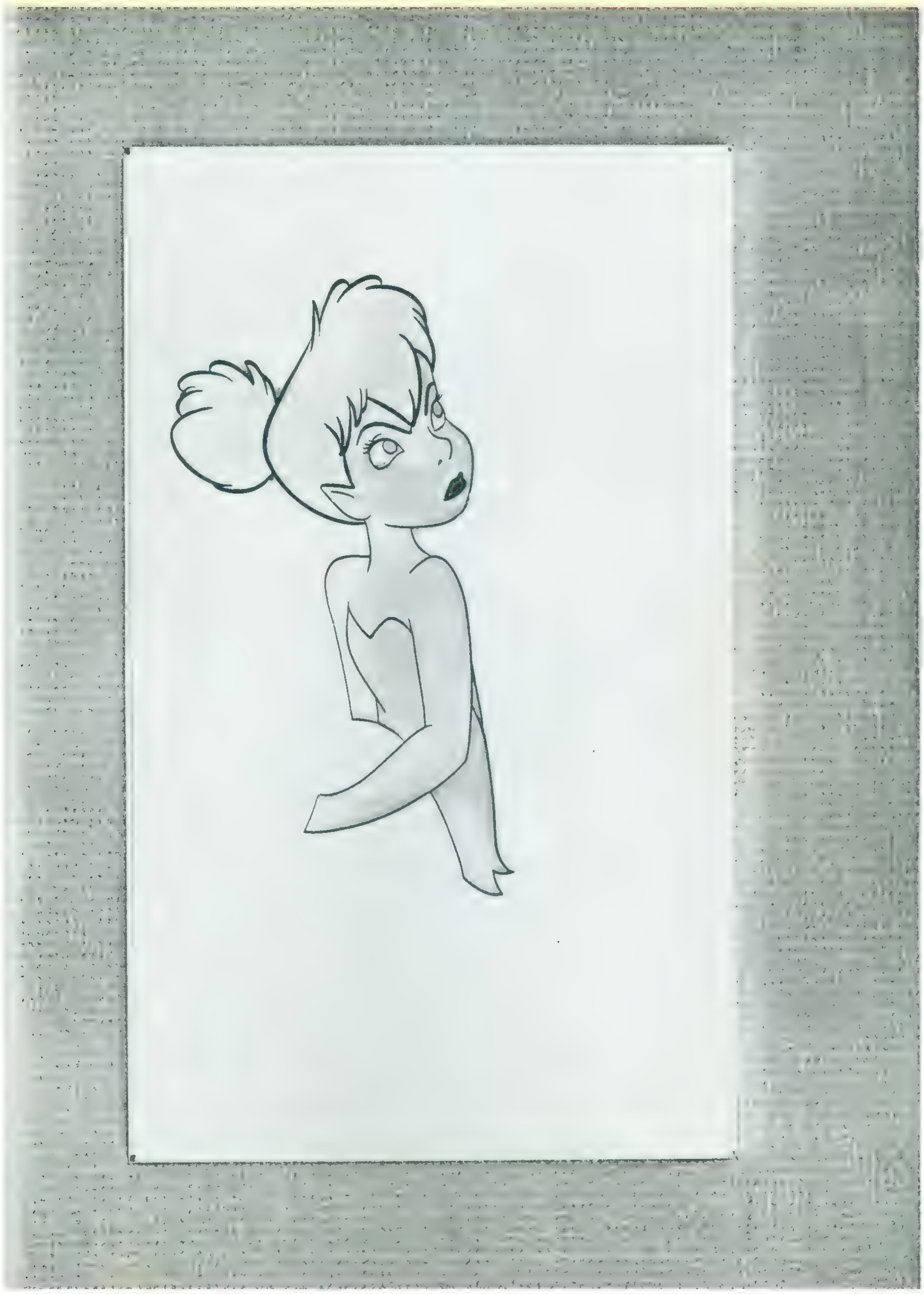
"Tinkerbell animated cels owned by Mike Price."

- Dave Sim



"Tinkerbell animated cels owned by Mike Price."

- Dave Sim



"Tinkerbell animated cels owned by Mike Price."

- Dave Sim

"Christmas card drawn by Mike Price."

- Dave Sim

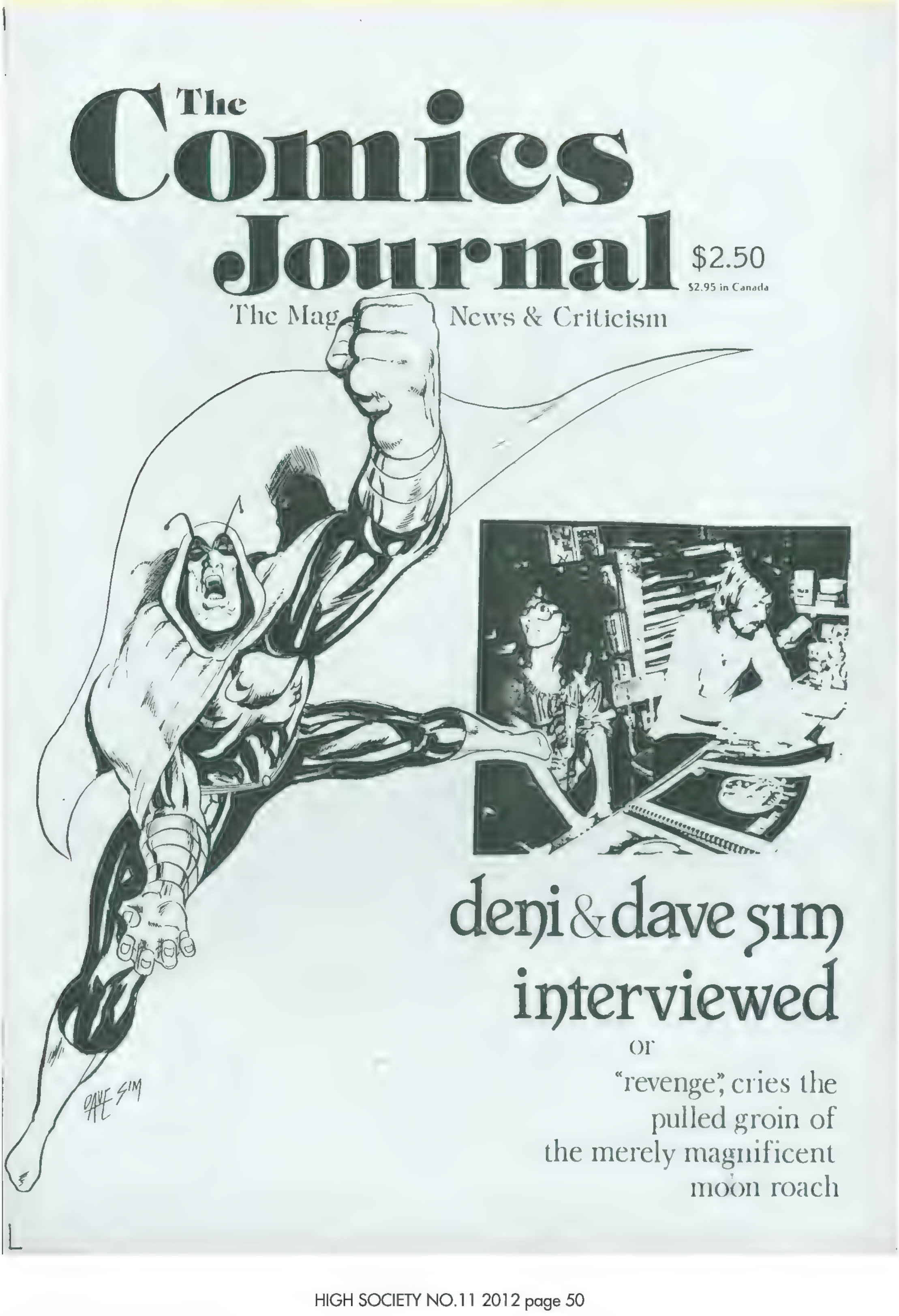
Yuletide joy be yours all year long!

This will be late, but at least I can wish you both continuing happiness and prosperity through 1983 and beyond!

mike

"My first design for the COMICS JOURNAL cover when it was still a one-part interview conducted by Kim Thompson in New York City on the '82 Tour."

- Dave Sim

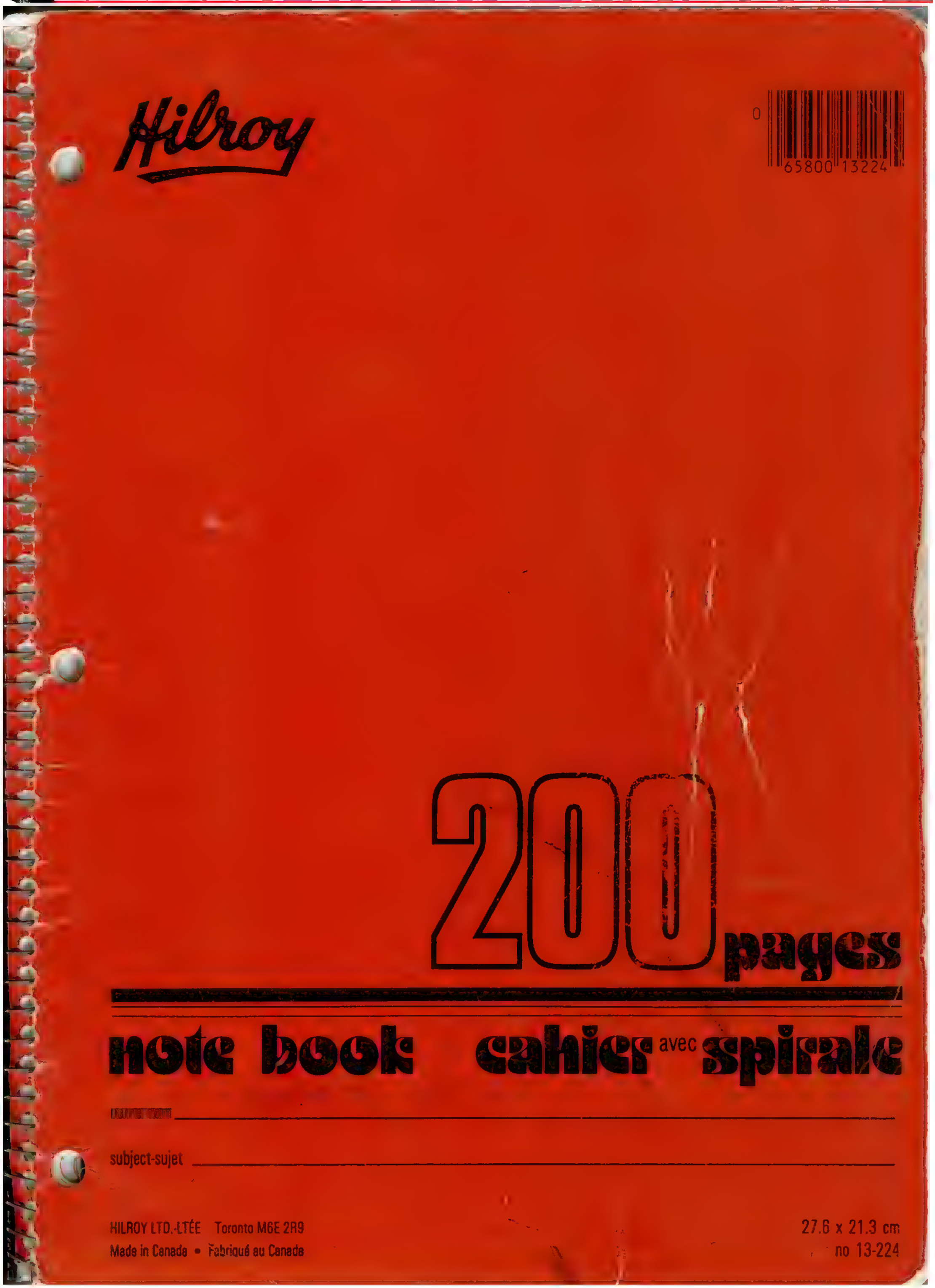


CEREBUS

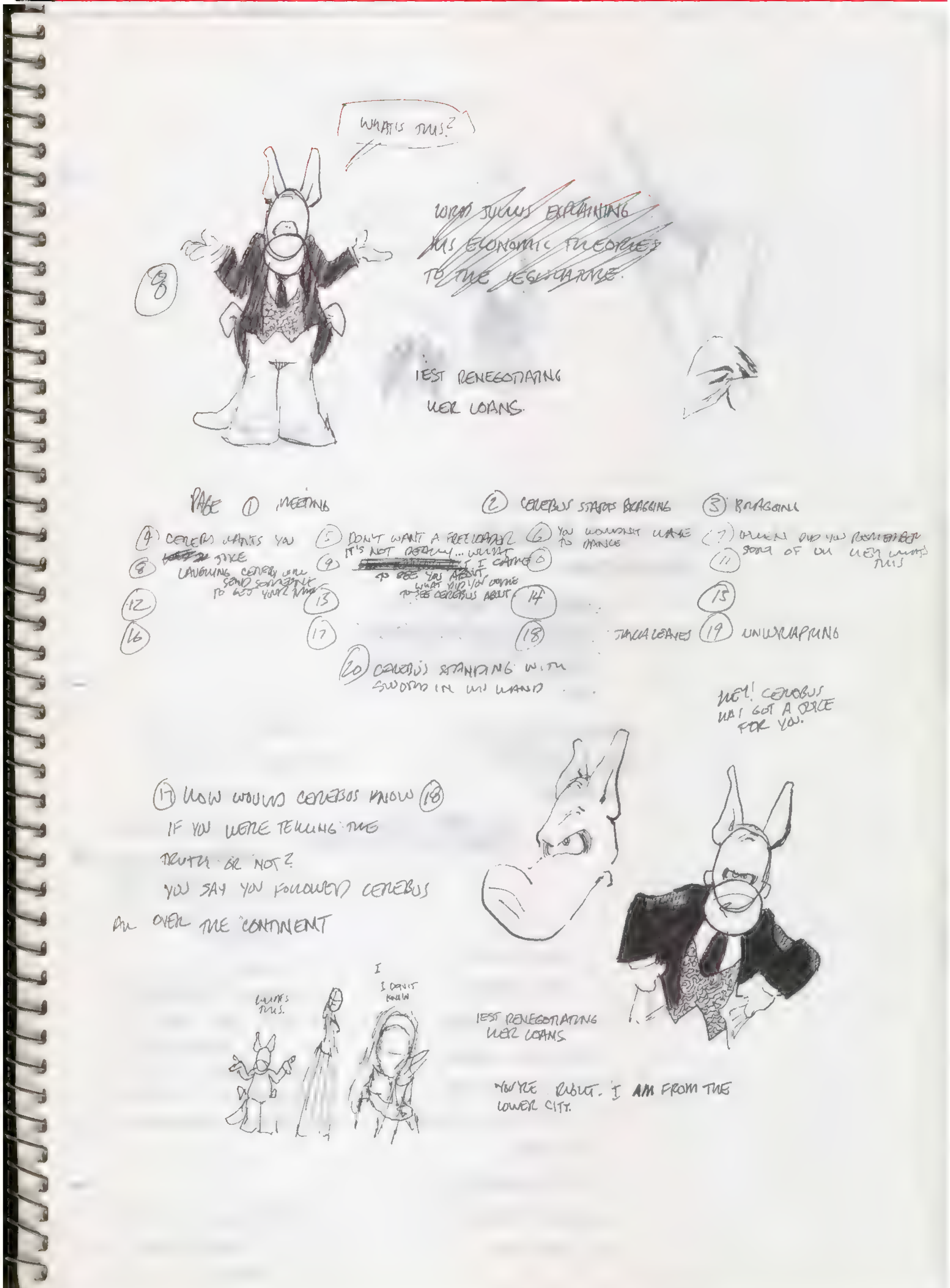
ARCHIVE

NOTEBOOKS

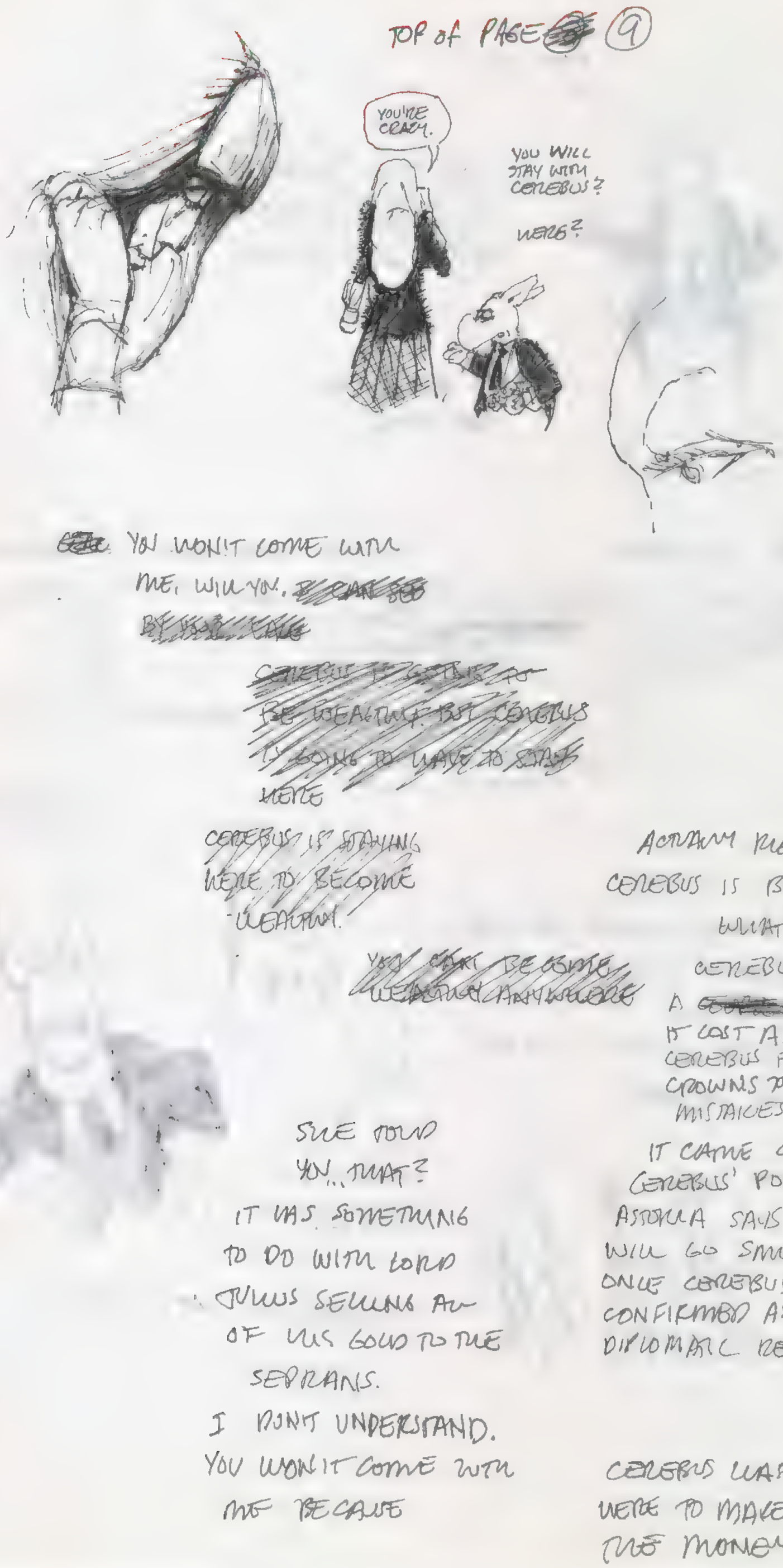
"Albatross Too"



I began using notebooks to plot CEREBUS beginning with issue 20. I called the notebook my "albatross" since it was always with me, a constant reminder of work I had to do. Plotting for HIGH SOCIETY began on page 135 of the 200-page "Albatross One" (although much plotting of the various political factions takes place on the earlier pages and on – now long gone – scraps of paper).


WHAT IS THIS?
WHEN JULIUS EXPLAINING HIS ECONOMIC THEORIES TO THE LEGISLATURE.
8
IEST RENEGOTIATING HER LOANS.
PAGE (1) MEETING
(2) CEREBUS STARTS BRAGGING
(3) BRAGGING
(4) CEREBUS WANTS YOU
(5) DON'T WANT A FREELOADER
(6) YOU WOULDN'T WANT
(7) QUEEN DID YOU REMEMBER
(8) LAUGHING CEREBUS WILL SEND SOMETHING TO KEEP YOUR MIND
(9) IT'S NOT REALLY... WHAT I CAME TO SEE YOU ABOUT
(10) TO INVOICE
(11) SOME OF OUR USERS WANTS THIS
(12)
(13)
(14)
(15)
(16)
(17)
(18) JAKA LOANED
(19) UNDERSTANDING
(20) CEREBUS STANDING WITH SWORD IN HIS HAND
HEY! CEREBUS HAS GOT A PRICE FOR YOU.
(17) HOW WOULD CEREBUS KNOW (18) IF YOU WERE TELLING THE TRUTH OR NOT?
YOU SAY YOU FOLLOWED CEREBUS ALL OVER THE CONTINENT
LAUGHS THIS.
I DON'T KNOW
IEST RENEGOTIATING HER LOANS
YOU'RE RIGHT. I AM FROM THE LOWER CITY.

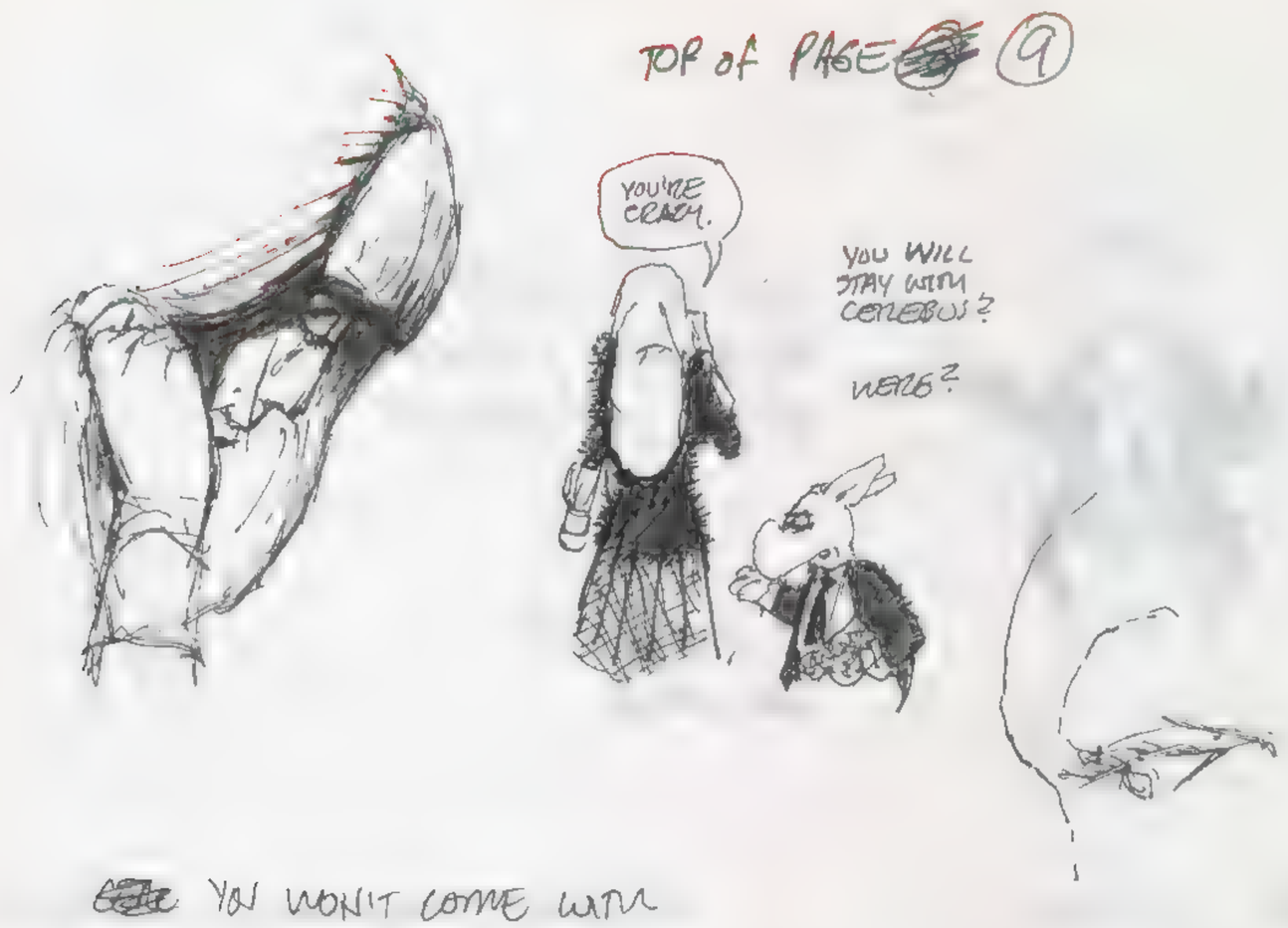
HSANB 1/36 - With the earlier "run-through" while I was writing No.34, it just landed on the page like this. Jaka's (not to put too fine a point on it) psychotic neutrality at Cerebus' response to "you must be very happy" ("They're all afraid of Cerebus here") is why it has the appearance of a relationship. It's actually quite scary – only being happy when others are afraid of you. Jaka's psychotic neutrality stems from her being an object of obsessive interest to the general public all of her life. Like Princess Diana but from birth.


TOP of PAGE 9
YOU'RE CRAZY.
YOU WILL STAY WITH CEREBUS?
WERE?
YOU WON'T COME WITH ME. WILL YOU.
BE WEAKING. BUT CEREBUS IS GOING TO HAVE TO
HERE
CEREBUS IS STAYING HERE TO BECOME
ACTUALLY RIGHT NOW.
CEREBUS IS BROKE..
WHAT?
CEREBUS MADE A ... MISTAKE.
IT COST ASTORIA AND CEREBUS FIVE HUNDRED CROWNS TO FIX THE MISTAKES.
SHE TOLD YOU... WHAT?
IT WAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH LORD JULIUS SELLING ALL OF HIS GOLD TO THE SERRANS.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
YOU WON'T COME WITH ME BECAUSE
IT CAME OUT OF CEREBUS' POCKET. BUT ASTORIA SAYS THINGS WILL GO SMOOTHLY ONCE CEREBUS IS CONFIRMED AS RANKING DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVE.
CEREBUS HAS TO STAY HERE TO MAKE BACK ALL THE MONEY HE LOST

HSANB 2/36 - When Cerebus says "She [Astoria] has a room behind a sliding panel," I originally have Jaka saying, "How nice for her. Just the three of us. All cozy-like." No, it wouldn't work with Cerebus. Everything is a threat. He would just start an argument about her tone.

Because they're circling each other warily, any line that wasn't completely thought out would take the whole issue off the rails. Like:

continued...


TOP of PAGE 9
YOU'RE CRAZY.
YOU WILL STAY WITH CEREBUS?
WERE?
YOU WONT COME WITH ME. WILL YOU.
CEREBUS IS STAYING HERE TO BECOME ENLIGHTENED.
ACTUALLY RIGHT NOW. CEREBUS IS BROKE..
WHAT?
CEREBUS MADE A ... MISTAKE IT COST ASTORIA AND CEREBUS FIVE HUNDRED CROWNS TO FIX THE MISTAKES.
SHE FOUND YOU... WHAT?
IT WAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH LORD JULIUS SELLING ALL OF HIS GOLD TO THE SERPANS.
I DONT UNDERSTAND.
YOU WONT COME WITH ME BECAUSE
CEREBUS LIES TO STAY HERE TO MAKE BACK ALL THE MONEY HE LOST

CEREBUS: Oh, no. Cerebus was kidnapped. They took that money when they knocked him out. Astoria gave Cerebus the money he has now.

JAKA: Everyone used to give you money and now Astoria does.

CEREBUS: Yeah...Cerebus hadn't thought of that. But. It doesn't matter. Cerebus gets...

JAKA: Free meals. Free ale. Free rooms.

As a Palnan aristocrat, she would realize just how stupid he was being and how badly he was being exploited by Astoria which would knock her out of her psychotic neutrality. So, I couldn't follow that trajectory. Same as "Dancing is for whores." A definite Cerebus sentiment, but one he would know not to give voice to.

"Would you still kill a yak for my supper...or are you now too important for that, too?" The first half was okay, the second half was too confrontational.

~~BUT YOU'VE GOT FOUR HUNDRED CROWNS~~
YOU SAID.
AYE, BUT CEREBUS MADE ALMOST TWO THOUSAND
CROWNS THE FIRST DAY HE WAS HERE -- HE
SPENT WHPM UMP CROWNS OF THAT, AND THEN
HE GOT KIDNAPPED AND THE KIDNAPPERS TOOK
ALL OF CEREBUS' MONEY.
SO WHERE DID YOU GET...
ASTORIA GAVE CEREBUS A THOUSAND CROWNS WHEN
SHE STARTED TAKING CARE OF CEREBUS' BUSINESS.
AND THEN LORD JULIUS SOLD ALL HIS GOLD TO
THE SERVIANS AND ~~CEREBUS~~ HAD TO PAY ~~INTEREST~~ INTEREST.
ON SOME LOANS.
HAD TO PAY
WHAT?
IN... TEREST.
INTEREST?
~~HEE~~ AYE. INTEREST. BUT CEREBUS FORGOT TO CANCEL
ASTORIA'S APPOINTMENTS AND A BUSINESSMAN GOT MAD
AT US AND CEREBUS HAD TO PAY FIVE HUNDRED
CROWNS.
CEREBUS FIGURES IT THIS WAY; HE MADE ALMOST
THREE THOUSAND CROWNS SINCE HE GOT HERE
AND ALL HE HAS LEFT IS FOUR HUNDRED CROWNS.
THIS MAY COME AS SOMETHING OF A
SHOCK, BUT CURRENT GOSSIP ESTIMATES YOUR
NET WORTH AS BEING IN THE VICINITY OF
THREE QUARTERS OF A MILLION CROWNS.
AND
THAT'S JUST
YOUR PERSONAL
INCOME.

HSANB 3/36 - Trying to picture what Jaka would wear was tough. She would have gone through a dozen outfits trying to figure out how she would "present". I decided on a tactile "fuzzy" sweater. She wants to be touched. Deni had bought a similar sweater a short time before.

#37

I DON'T KNOW
WHAT TO SAY.

WHY DID YOU
COME TO SEE
CEREBUS

TO SEE IF YOU
REMEMBERED.

WHEN I HEARD
YOU HAD RETURNED... YOU'D COME BACK TO TEST.

I KEPT WONDERING
IF YOU'D COME BACK
TO ~~SEE~~ SEE ME... KEPT
WATCHING THE PEOPLE
COMING IN... ~~SCANNING~~
EVERY FACE... HOPING.

I THOUGHT IF I CAME
HERE TONIGHT THEY'D
TELL ME YOU NEVER
HEARD OF ME...

AND THAT
WOULD BE
THAT.

I DON'T BELONG HERE...
YOU DON'T EITHER. THE
WAY YOU LOOKED WHENEVER
YOU TALKED ABOUT SOME
FAR-OFF LAND... ~~THE SCENERY~~

AND NOW THIS. A MAUSOLEUM.
TO LIVE OUT YOUR DAYS IN THE
PURSUIT OF BEAUTY COLOURED
SCRAPS OF PAPER.

~~CEREBUS IS TIRED OF~~
~~BEING POOR.~~

BUT CEREBUS DID
REMEMBER YOU...
AND NOW CEREBUS
WANTS YOU TO STAY
HERE WITH HIM.

~~YOU'RE NOT GOING IN SO EASY FOR YOU~~
~~THIS TIME~~

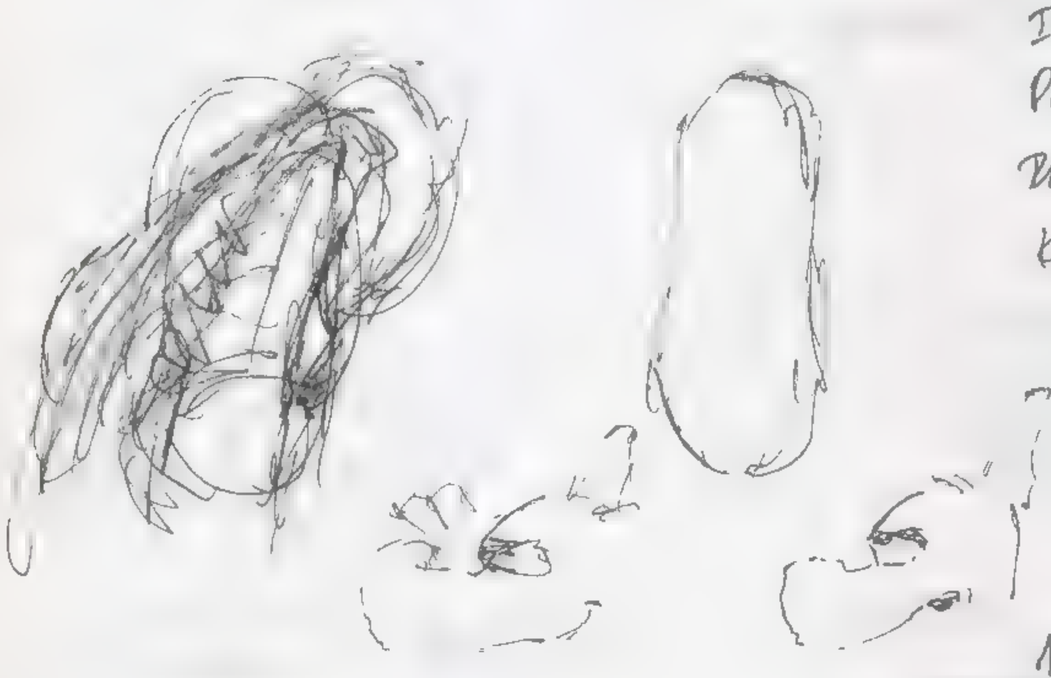
~~LOST~~

~~YOU'RE SO DIFFERENT NOW.~~
~~HARDER NOW~~

HSANB 4/36 - I was still missing the tone I wanted. It needed to be much quieter so I started writing using smaller letters...right away I got the "When did you remember about me. About us." part.

⑥ wiping her eyes while Cerebus says she will be living with someone important. Ranking Diplomatic Representative of Palnu can stop dancing. Like dancing. Harumph and all that. Jaka hurt stinking back. Still held a grudge

⑦ for my supper (angry) (angry) silence. When did you remember about us? Underneath.. tell a joke ☺ She smiles. You're crazy. Why did you come to see Cerebus.



I WANTED TO SEE THOSE PLACES YOU TALKED ABOUT THE WALL OF TSI, THE RAPMIN KINGDOMS

I WANTED YOU TO COME WITH ME.

NO. CEREBUS WAS TO STAY HERE AND MAKE MONEY.

Money isn't important

Of course money is important ~~Money makes Cerebus important~~ Why else would Cerebus stay here.

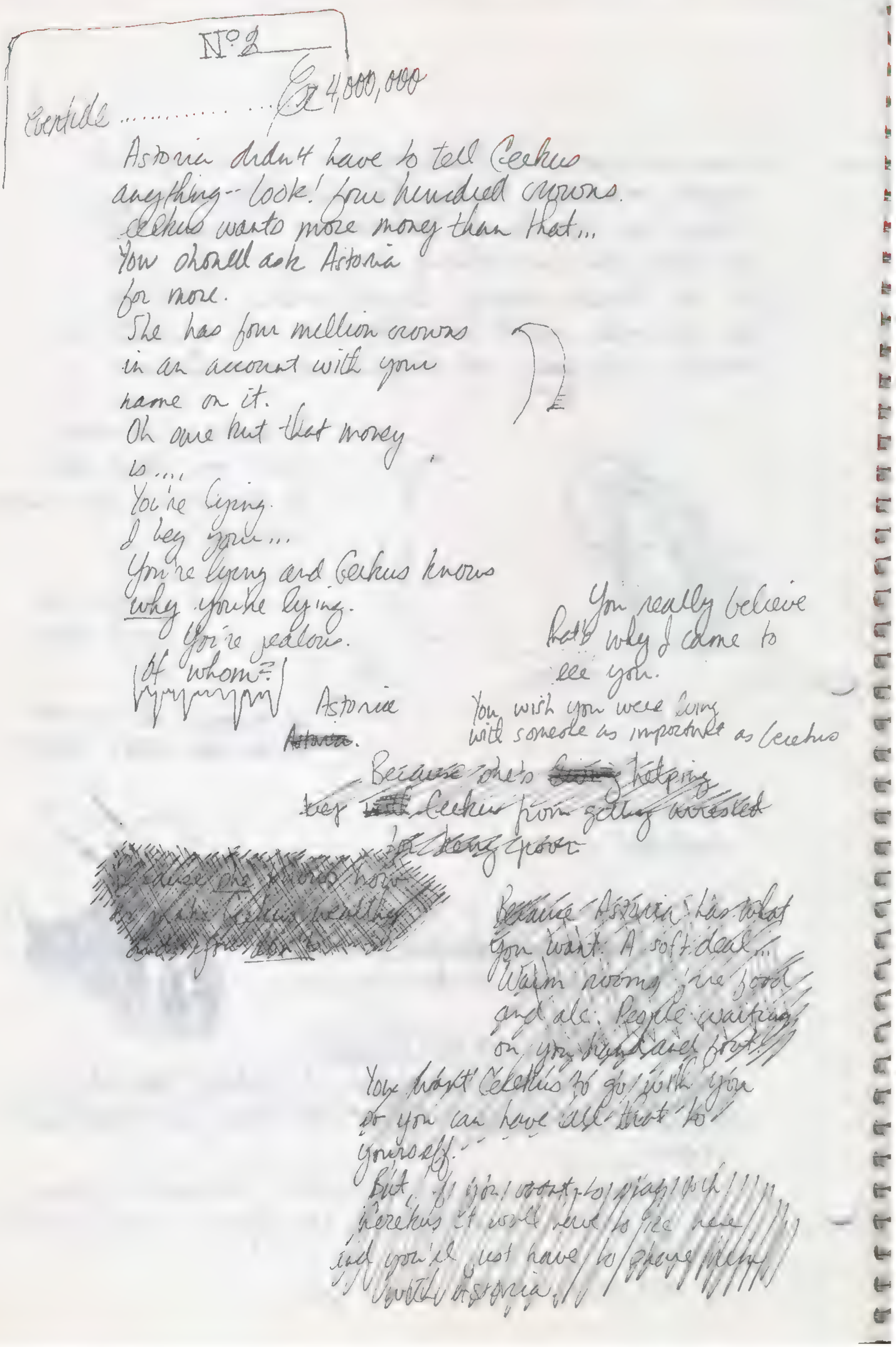
What?

Cerebus lost almost two thousand crowns when he was kidnapped. He didn't count Astoria's appointments but that cost him five hundred crowns

Cerebus has made almost three thousand crowns since he got here and all he has left is four hundred crowns.

Is that what Astoria told you.

HSANB 5/36 - Too quiet for Cerebus. He would have to tell her a joke to try to break the ice. That was good. Then I started using tiny letters and I couldn't hear what I was writing any more. TOO quiet.


No 2
Cerebus £4,000,000
Astoria didn't have to tell Cerebus anything -- look! Four hundred crowns. Cerebus wants more money than that... You should ask Astoria for more.
She has four million crowns in an account with your name on it.
Oh one but that money is....
You're lying.
I beg your...
You're lying and Cerebus knows why you're lying.
You're jealous.
(of whom?)
Astoria
Astoria.
You really believe that's why I came to see you.
You wish you were living with someone as important as Cerebus
Because she's helping Cerebus from getting arrested
Because Astoria has what you want. A soft bed... Warm rooms, nice food and ale. People waiting on you hand and foot.
You didn't Cerebus to go with you so you can have all that to yourself.
But if you want to play with Cerebus it will have to be here and you'll just have to play with Astoria.

HSANB 6/36 - Originally I was trying to get to the point where Jaka is trying to persuade Cerebus to leave with her which was the part I was having trouble hooking up with. So I decided to start with:

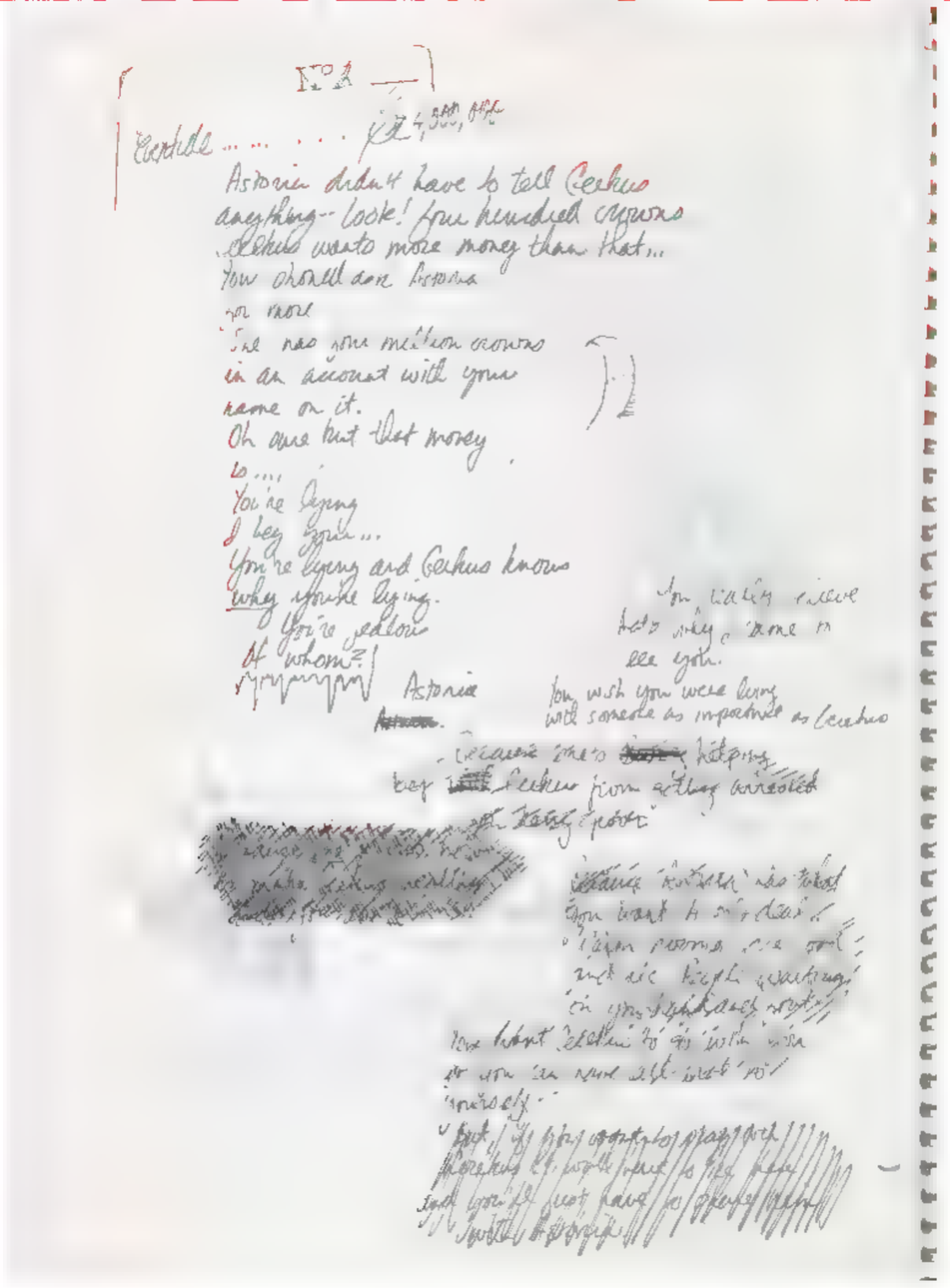
JAKA: You won't come with me, will you.

Figuring I could work backward from there in finding the right conversational bridge. But, for the time being, I'd just work forward from there:

CEREBUS: Actually, right now, Cerebus is broke.

JAKA: What?

continued...



CEREBUS: Cerebus made a...mistake. It cost Astoria and Cerebus five hundred crowns to fix the mistake. It came out of Cerebus' pocket. But Astoria says things will go smoothly once Cerebus is confirmed as Ranking Diplomatic Representative.
JAKA: She told you...that?
CEREBUS: It was something to do with Lord Julius selling of his gold to the Seprans.
JAKA: I don't understand. You won't come with me because...
CEREBUS: Aye. But Cerebus made almost two thousand crowns the first day he was here – he spent [umpty-ump] crowns of that, and then he got kidnapped and the kidnappers took all of Cerebus' money.
JAKA: So where did you get – ?
CEREBUS: Astoria gave Cerebus a thousand crowns when she started taking care of Cerebus' business. And then Lord Julius sold all his gold to the Seprans and Cerebus had to pay indressed on some loans.
JAKA: Had to pay...what?
CEREBUS: In...dressed.
JAKA: Interest?
CEREBUS: Aye. Interest. And Cerebus forgot to cancel Astoria's appointments and a businessman go mad at us and Cerebus had to pay five hundred crowns. Cerebus figures it this way: he made almost three thousand crowns since he got here and all he has left is four hundred crowns.
JAKA: This may come as something as a shock, but current gossip estimates your net worth as being in the vicinity of three-quarters of a million crowns...and that's just your personal income.
. wanted to follow the thread to show how badly Astoria was taking Cerebus to the cleaners but it had too many negative compelled inferences – foremost among them that it would at least look as if Jaka had only come looking for Cerebus because she had heard he was rich. I needed to tack back in the other direction towards who Jaka was:
CEREBUS: Why did you come to see Cerebus?
JAKA: To see if you remembered. When I heard you had returned...you'd come back to lest...I kept wondering if you come back to see me...kept watching the people coming in... every face...hoping. I thought if I came here tonight, they'd tell me you never heard of me...and that would be that.
CEREBUS: But Cerebus did remember you...and now Cerebus wants you to stay here with him.
JAKA: I don't belong here...you don't either. The way you looked whenever you talked about some far-off land...and now this. A mausoleum. To live out your days in the pursuit of brightly coloured scraps of paper. I wanted to see those places you talked about. The Wall of Tsi, the T'Capmin Kingdoms. I wanted you to come with me.
CEREBUS: No. Cerebus has to stay here and make money.
JAKA: Money isn't important.
CEREBUS: Of course money is important. Why else would Cerebus stay here? Cerebus has made almost three thousands crowns since he got here and all he has left is four hundred crowns.
JAKA: Is that what Astoria told you?
CEREBUS: Astoria didn't have to tell Cerebus anything – Look! Four hundred crowns. Cerebus wants more money than that...
JAKA: You should ask Astoria for more. She has four million crowns in an account with your name on it.
CEREBUS: Oh, sure, but that money is... [it sinks in]...You're lying.
JAKA: I beg your...
CEREBUS: You're lying and Cerebus knows why you're lying. You're jealous.
JAKA: Of whom?
CEREBUS: Astoria.
JAKA: You really believe that's why I came to see you.
CEREBUS: You wish you were living with someone as important as Cerebus.

No. Even "backing into it" didn't work. The compelled inference is still that Jaka has come to see him because she's found out he has four million crowns – even though she's asking him to walk away from it.

describes her assets

she bought the sword from a ~~fisherman~~ businessman from Bedwin. He had got it all tangled in his nets some weeks before. At first he didn't want to sell it. But ~~she~~ I had at last persuaded him

It depends

Depends on what?

~~What if~~ How well you're doing without Cerebus.

As opposed to how well you'd be doing with Cerebus. hmm?

To be quite honest with you, I have recently lost most of the money I had saved. I'm quite destitute. Stony broke.

That's not all. Aha!

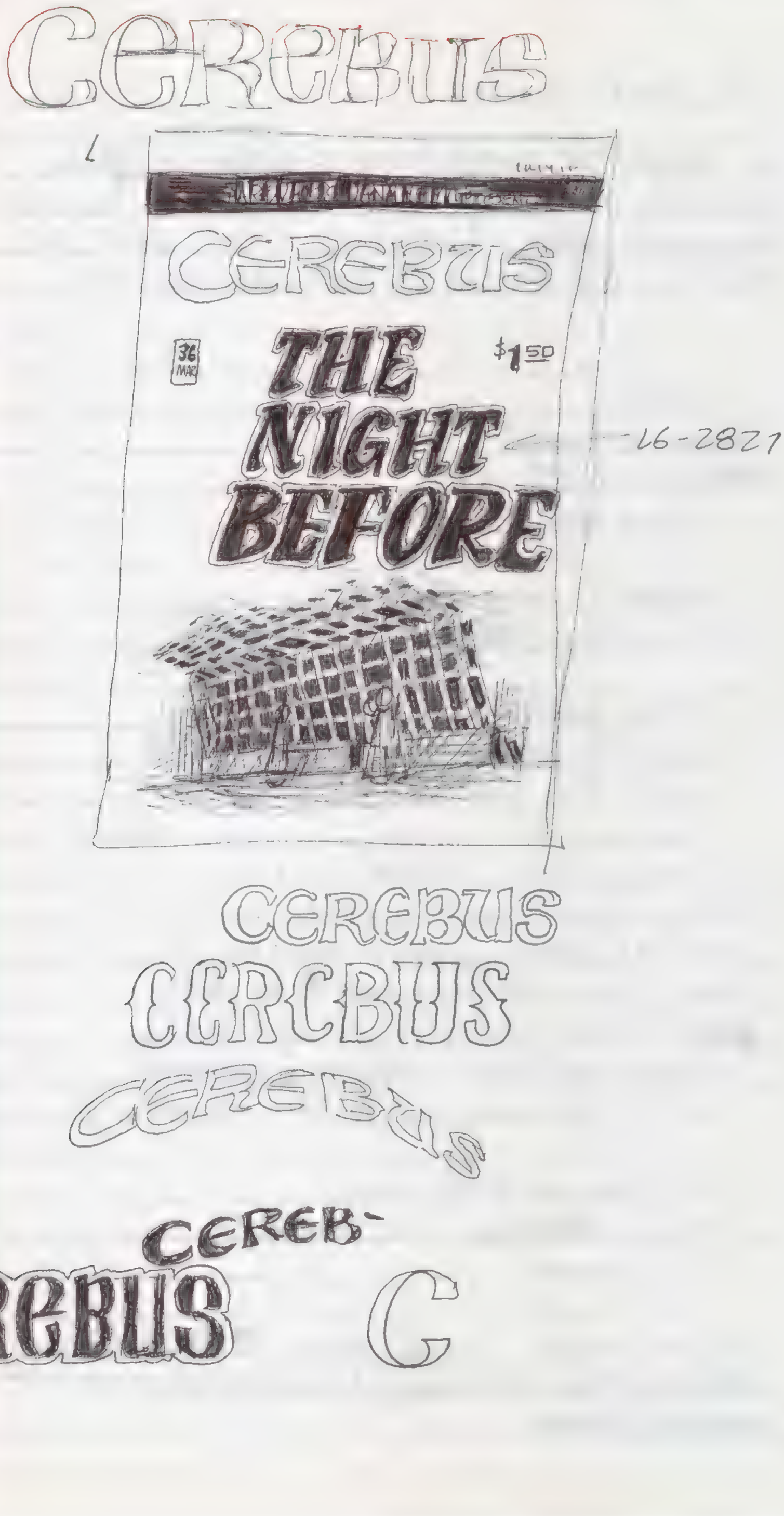
In point of fact, I frittered all of my money away, liquidating some stocks and real estate I have managed to obtain in the last few years. ~~I~~ ~~They~~ ~~paid~~ My asking price of five hundred crowns was met. In addition I withdrew another fifty crowns from the Bank of Iest

What happened to the money.

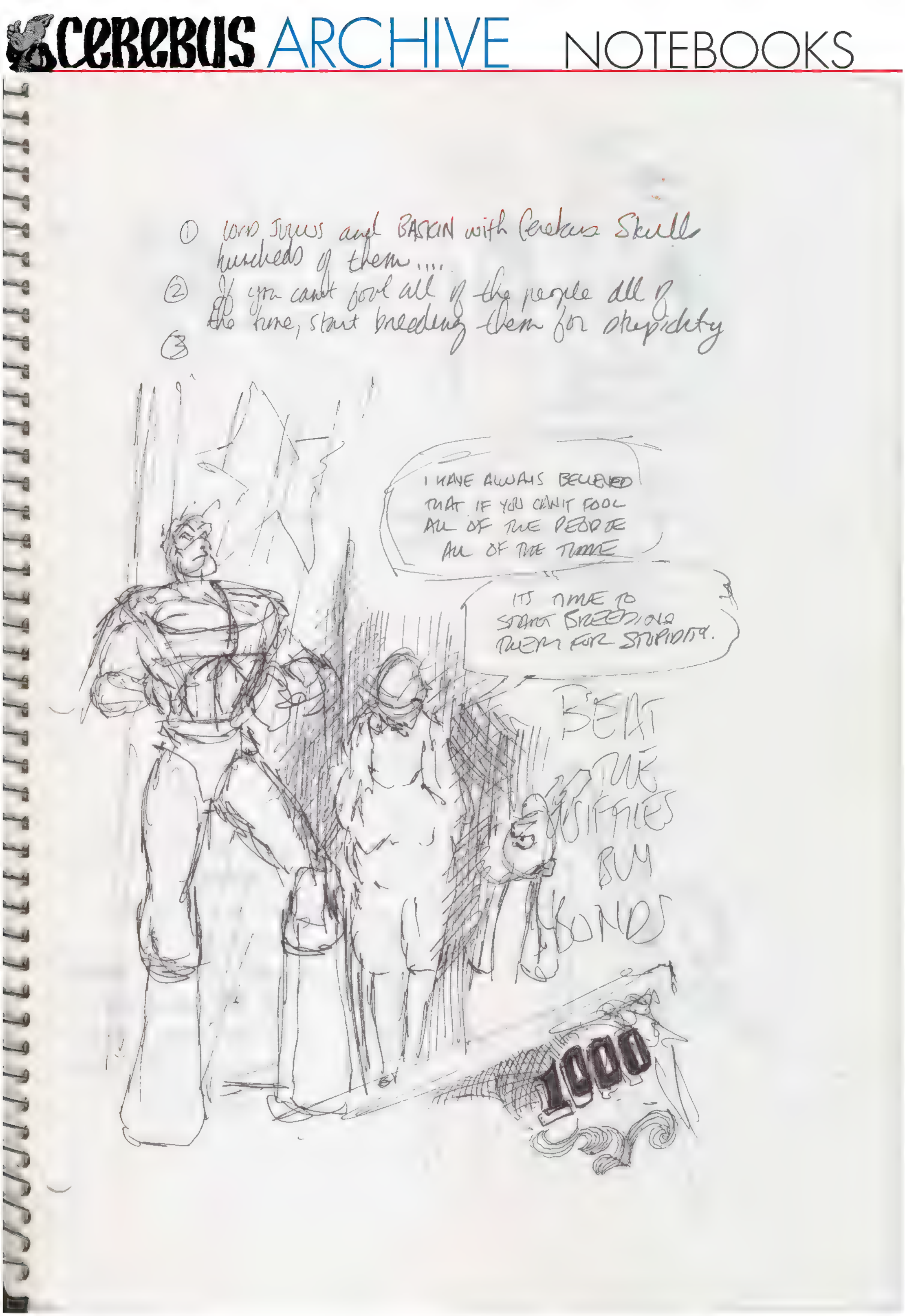
I bought ~~what I am~~ this. ~~Perhaps~~ It's a present for you.

I recognized it right away. ~~I~~ ~~knew~~ ~~that I had~~ ~~brought it with him to the tavern. Suicide deed~~ ~~might be found~~

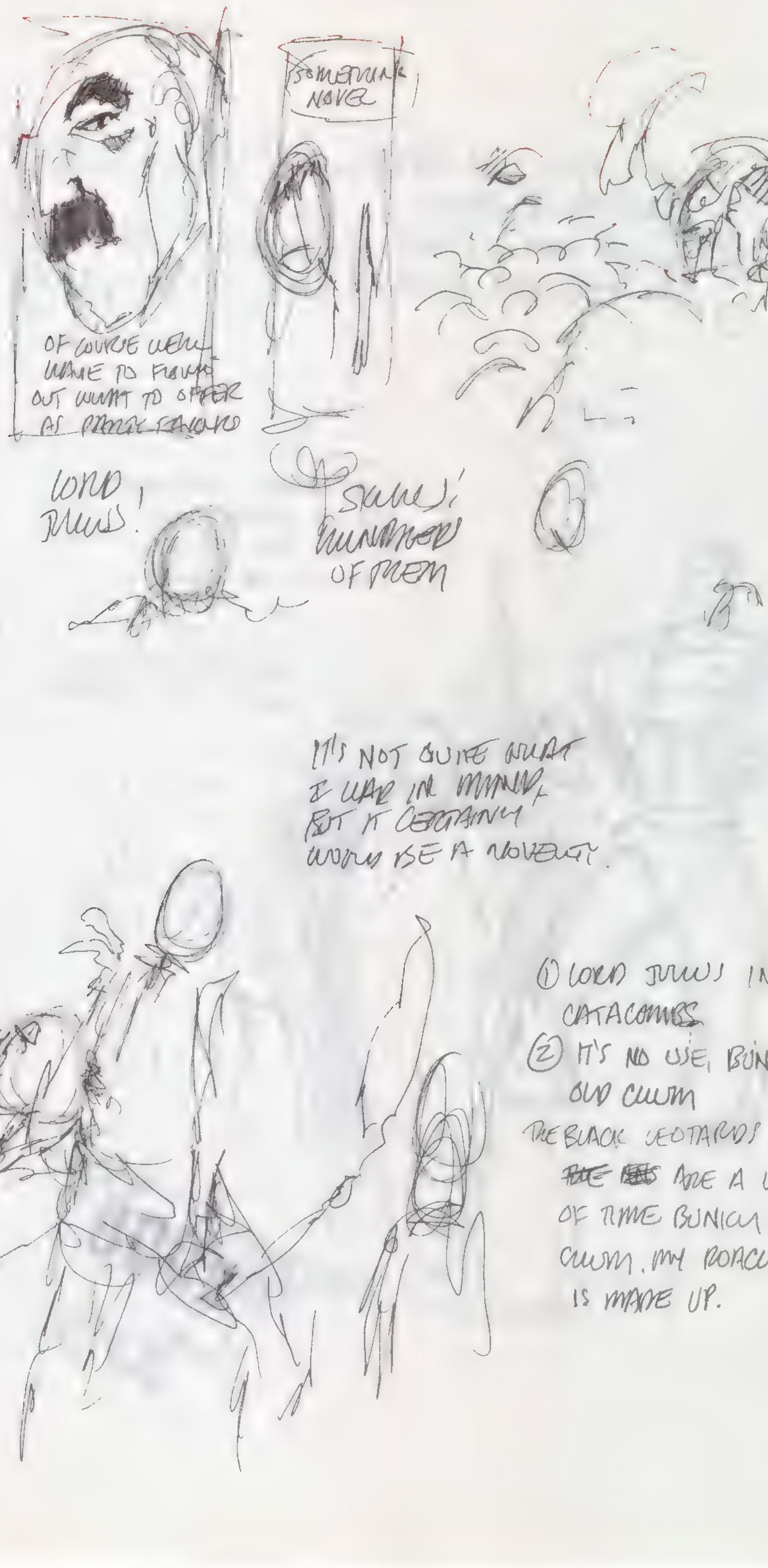
HSANB 7/36 - I decided to skip that part of the conversation completely and rough in the ending. By the time I had the ending roughed in and the nearly silent three-page denouement, as often happened, I found out I was done. But, as also often happened, it would take me a few days to figure that out.



HSANB 8/36 - Rough sketch of the cover of No.36. I really wanted to get away from the traditional comic-book cover look and move over in the direction of innovative designs being used on paperback books. I was also starting to think it was time for a new, cleaner logo after four years of sticking with the original Cerebus "brand".
The "LG-2827" refers to the Letraset instant dry transfer lettering style "Letragraphica 2827": Flamenco Inline designed by Tony Geddes.


① Lord Jesus and BASKIN with Cerebus Skull hundreds of them....
② If you can't fool all of the people all of the time, start breeding them for stupidity
③
I HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT IF YOU CAN'T FOOL ALL OF THE PEOPLE ALL OF THE TIME
IT'S TIME TO START BREEDING THEM FOR STUPIDITY.
BEAT
UK
SUFFRAGETTES
BUM
BONDS
1900

HSANB 9/36 - I'm not sure why I suddenly interrupted No.36 to design this image around the President Weisshaupt quote from page 445 of the CEREBUS trade paperback: "I have always believed that if you can't fool all of the people all of the time, it's time to start breeding them for stupidity". For the forthcoming SWORDS OF CEREBUS volume six?...


OF COURSE WE'LL HAVE TO FIGURE OUT WHAT TO OFFER AS PARTY FAVOURS
SOMETHING NOVEL
LORD JULIUS!
SKULLS! HUNDREDS OF THEM
IT'S NOT QUITE WHAT I HAD IN MIND, BUT IT CERTAINLY WOULD BE A NOVELTY.
① LORD JULIUS IN THE CATACOMBS
② IT'S NO USE, BUNKLE OLD CHUM
THE BLACK LEOTARDS ~~ARE IF~~ ~~HE~~ ~~HAS~~ ARE A WASTE OF TIME BUNKLE OLD CHUM. MY POACH MIND IS MADE UP.

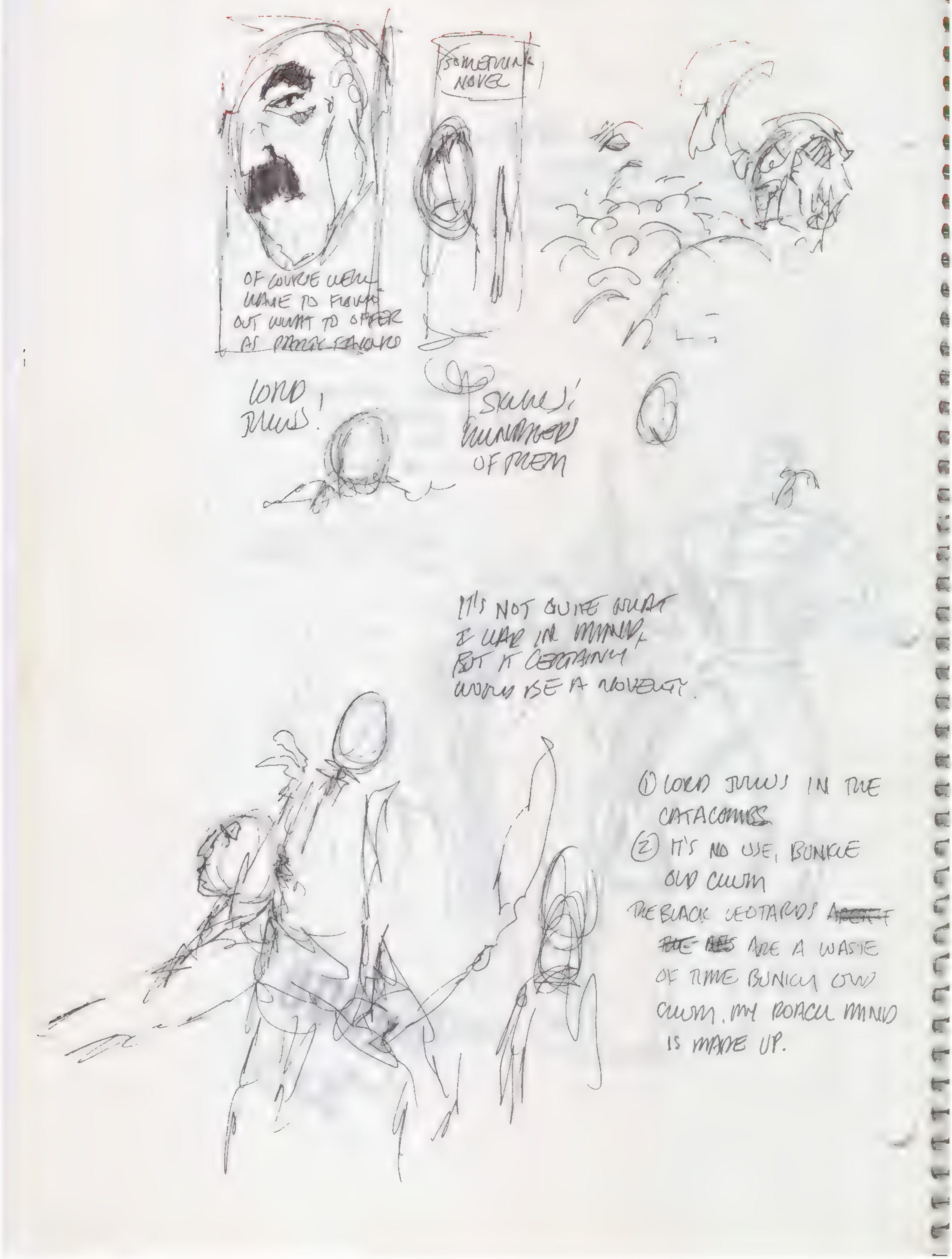
HSANB 10/36 - ...or this unused gag from CEREBUS No.15 where Cerebus, Lord Julius and Baskin are scouting The Pits as a location for The Festival of Petunias:

LORD JULIUS: Of course, we'll have to figure out what to offer as party favours.

Something novel.

[Baskin holding his torch inside a side passage, covered in human skulls]

continued...


SOMETHING NOVEL
OF COURSE WE'LL HAVE TO FIGURE OUT WHAT TO OFFER AS BONUS FEATURES
LORD JULIUS!
SKULLS! HUNDREDS OF THEM
IT'S NOT QUITE WHAT I HAD IN MIND, BUT IT CERTAINLY WOULD BE A NOVELTY.
① LORD JULIUS IN THE CATACOMBS
② IT'S NO USE, BUNKIE OLD CHUM
THE BLACK LEOTARDS ~~ARE IF YOU~~ ARE A WASTE OF TIME BUNKY OLD CHUM. MY ROACH MIND IS MADE UP.

BASKIN: LORD JULIUS! SKULLS! HUNDREDS OF THEM!
LORD JULIUS: It's not quite what I had in mind, but it certainly would be a novelty.
...or the unused "The black leotards are a waste of time, Bunky, old chum. My Roach-Mind is made up." from just a couple of issues back.

(18) Gives him package. Jaka! Stops her..

(19) She leaves

(20) Cerebus unwraps package

(21) sword.

Next PETUNIACON DAY ONE

(5)

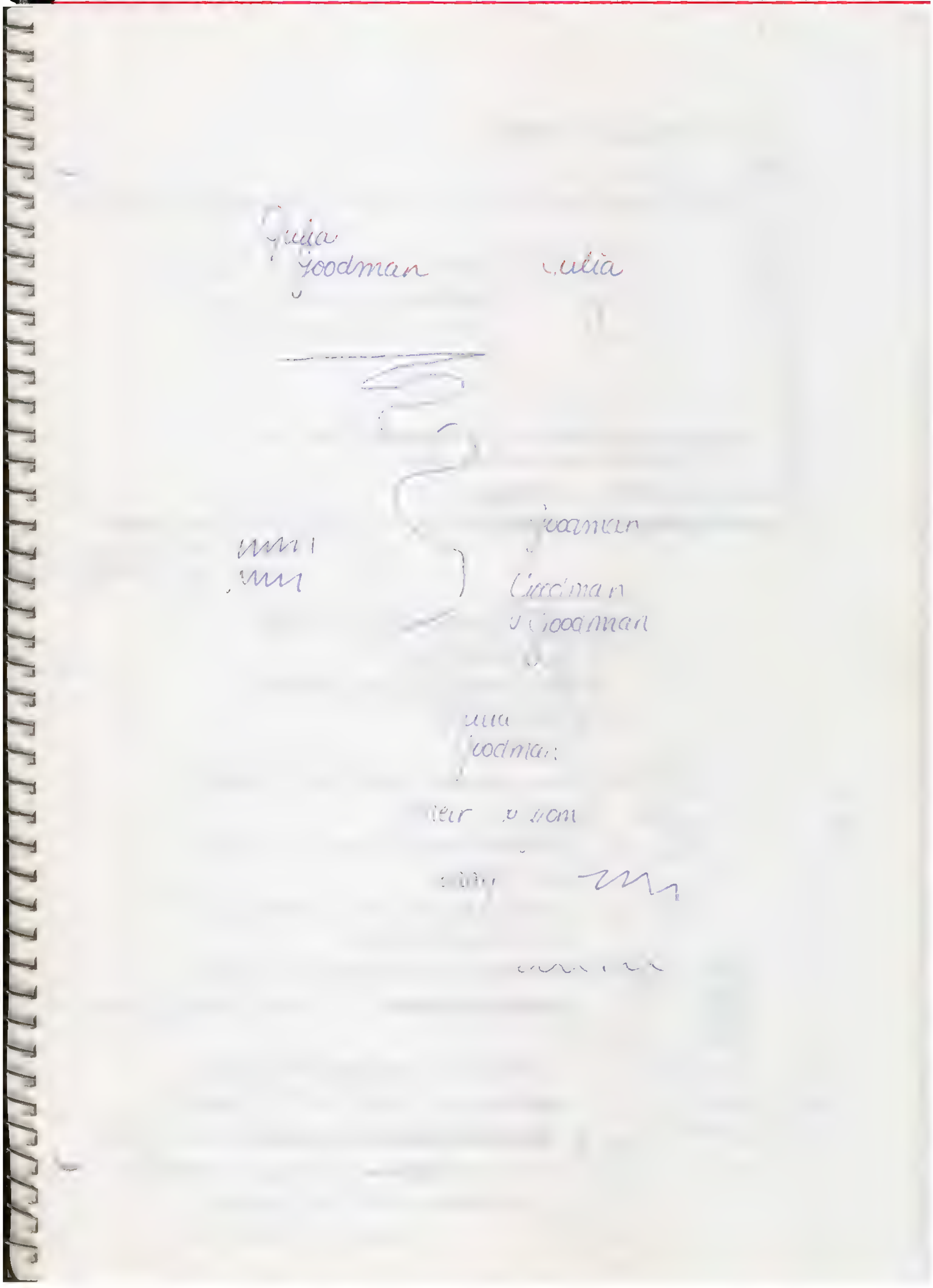
(6) ~~tells joke she laughs~~ someone important dancing like dancing not appropriate. I see and warned you but did a yoke for my puppies or are you too important now for that as well?

(7) when did you remember about us? While ago. Hey tells a joke. You're angry.

(8) You'll stay with Cerebus. Won't you. won't you. You want ~~Cerebus to come with you~~. ~~to stay Cerebus~~ to be with Cerebus don't you.

HSANB 11/36 - Anyway, I was right back at roughing in No.36 on this page.

HSANB 12/36 - Page design for page 7 where I first got the idea for an open concept – "radiation" backgrounds around Cerebus and Jaka and lots of white space.



HSANB 13/36 - Julia Goodman was over visiting and wanted to try out a pen and just grabbed the nearest available paper which was my notebook. She wasn't an influence in the creation of the Regency Elf but she arrived on the scene – a friend of Deni's sister, Karen – shortly after I started doing the Regency Elf and she was the most Regency Elf-like woman I have ever known. We cracked each other up. I made a lot of women laugh but there were very few women who made me laugh. She was hilarious and very, very pretty.

#36 "THE NIGHT BEFORE"

PAGE

(10) My. the prime minister. You are doing well for yourself, aren't you?

(11)

(12)

(13)

(14)

(15)

(16)

(17)

(18) 1 (a) the prime minister. Lord Julius.

[1] You really are moving up in the world, aren't you?

(19) WHERE WILL YOU GO WHAT'S WITH YOU DO. SUPPORTED MYSELF SINCE I WAS TWELVE YEARS OLD the Slums.

(20) Staring at package unwrapping

~~unwrapping it~~. unwrapped award 1 (b) THAT'S WHY CEREBUS

[2] WASN'T SO SURPRISED WHEN YOU SHOWED UP.

Jaka/Mike + Cerebus talk for a while. Mike leaves. Cerebus knocks like you came to see him. Enter Jaka.

[3] 1 (c) Astoria warned Cerebus that it would happen.

[4] (2) That what would happen? I don't understand.

[5] (3) Friends from the past, showing up on Cerebus' doorstep.

~~Cerebus Jaka Astoria Mike Weird~~

[8] (6) Are you inferring that I'm here ~~to~~ ~~sponge off of you~~? for some kind of handout.

[9] (7) No.

now that Cerebus is so...

[6] (4) successful.

Cerebus is implying that you're ~~not~~ here for some kind of handout.

[7] (5)

[10] (8) ~~You really took offense~~ (blank look)

[11] (9) You see, ~~implying~~ inferring is something the listener does. implying is I - know - the difference.

[12] (10)

HSANB 14-17/36 - Final tweaking of the lead-in to the end of the issue, with each line numbered. Jaka and Cerebus talking past each other but still needing to at least appear as a conversation. It's a very tricky thing to accomplish.

~~I don't believe it~~

13 (11) It's okay. Cerebus has plenty of money.

14 (12) Cerebus can afford to give you a handout, Jaka.

15 ~~(13)~~

16

17

I DIDN'T COME HERE FOR CHARITY.

I CAME TO SEE YOU.

YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, DO YOU?

I CAN TELL BY THE WAY YOU'RE LOOKING AT ME...

CEREBUS HAS A QUESTION, THEN

~~HOW MUCH MONEY HAVE YOU GOT~~

~~I'M GOING TO HAVE TO ANSWER. CEREBUS HAS BEEN AROUND POOR PEOPLE ALL HIS LIFE.~~

HSANB 14-17/36 - Final tweaking of the lead-in to the end of the issue, with each line numbered. Jaka and Cerebus talking past each other but still needing to at least appear as a conversation. It's a very tricky thing to accomplish.

18 JAKA.

CEREBUS HAS MADE HIS LIVING AS A THIEF... A MERCENARY... A HIRED ASSASSIN...

~~WHAT DOES THAT MAKE ME TO HIM? WHAT I'LL BECOME.~~

~~[illegible]~~

~~[illegible]~~

~~[illegible]~~

~~[illegible]~~

19 ... CEREBUS KNOWS WHEN SOMEONE IS BROKE.

15A

20 YESTERDAY.

UNTIL ~~[illegible]~~, I FIFTY CROWNS.

~~HAD~~ FLUYBREEN ~~[illegible]~~

~~[illegible]~~S ON DEPOSIT IN THE BANK of JEST.

~~[illegible]~~

21 YOUR LIFE'S SAVINGS NO DOUBT. AND NOW IT'S GONE?

YES.

~~[illegible]~~ BAD INVESTMENTS?

22 ~~[illegible]~~

I'M BEGINNING TO THINK SO. YES.

23 THERE ARE A LOT OF SHADY CHARACTERS ~~[illegible]~~, ~~[illegible]~~. IN THE WORLD, JAKA. BUT YOU'LL BE SAFE FROM THEM LIVING HERE WITH CEREBUS.

~~[illegible]~~ B

~~[illegible]~~. HE WASN'T A SHADY CHARACTER, HE WAS A HIGHLY RESPECTED SAVAGE MERCHANT

24 FROM BERDIN.

WHAT DID HE SELL YOU? WORTHLESS STOCK IN HIS COMPANY?

25

~~[illegible]~~ THE FACT REMAINS THAT THE INVESTMENTS

SAVAGE MERCHANT. EH? ~~[illegible]~~

~~[illegible]~~

HSANB 14-17/36 - Final tweaking of the lead-in to the end of the issue, with each line numbered. Jaka and Cerebus talking past each other but still needing to at least appear as a conversation. It's a very tricky thing to accomplish.

26 IT WAS MORE LIKE... AN ART OBJECT. OHO!

27 I WASN'T SURE IT WAS REAL. HE LET ME PICK IT UP. AND YOU TRUSTED YOUR INSTINCTS. YES

~~WHEN I SAW IT, I BEGGED~~

28 AT FIRST HE DIDN'T WANT TO SEE. OLDEST TRICK IN THE BOOK.

29 HE SAID HE'D NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT.. A COMPLETELY UNKNOWN METAL ~~TO BITAA~~

30 CEREBUS ONCE STAINED ~~A~~ A METAL VASE WITH BERRY JUICE AND SOLD IT AS ~~A~~ RARE PINK-IRON ~~PROBABLY FOUND IT~~ ~~SOMEWHERE~~

31 HE/SAID HE FOUND IT WITH A LARGE QUANTITY OF GOLD COINS. SOME OF THEM DATING BACK THIRTY YEARS. AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SOFIM RIVER. ~~HEAD FOOL~~

~~IT'S NEVER TOO LONG FOR SOMEONE TO BE THE FIRST PERSON TO GET STUCK IN A PIECE~~

33 I THINK IT'S TIME I WAS LEAVING...

34 LEAVING... BUT YOU'RE BROKE! WHERE WILL YOU GO WHAT WILL YOU DO.

32 I GUESS YOU FEEL PRETTY STUPID, ~~HUH?~~ FOR BELIEVING HIM, NOW.

35 I'VE TAKEN CARE OF MYSELF SINCE I WAS 12... I DON'T THINK I'LL HAVE TOO MUCH DIFFICULTY.

36 AT LEAST LET CEREBUS GIVE YOU SOME CASH TO TIDE YOU OVER TO GIVE

37 NO. AS A MATTER OF FACT, I WANT YOU ~~TO HAVE~~ SOMETHING...

38 CEREBUS? WHAT IS IT?

39 THAT PACKAGE...

40 I'LL LEAVE IT UP TO YOU TO DECIDE IF IT WAS A BAD INVESTMENT...

41

42 (34) JAKA.

43 (35)

44 (36) JAKA...

45 (37) TURNS TO LOOK.

46 (38) THE PACKAGE.

PAGE 19 unwraps it.
PAGE 20 the sword

SHOWER and BATH people

SHOWER-
BATH - how can you get clean sitting in dirty water.

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DAVE SIM
CEREBUS
DAVE SIM
HIGH SOCIETY
church tate
church tate
JAKA STORY
MELMOTH
FLIGHT
WOMEN
READS
MINDS
GUYS
RICK'S STORY
GOING HOME
FARM VOID
CUTTER DAYS
THE LAST DAY